

New York blast probably 'terrorist' bomb

NEW YORK (R) — President Bill Clinton threw his full weight Saturday into the hunt for those behind a huge explosion that rocked New York's famous twin-tower World Trade Centre as police said the cause was "in all probability" a terrorist bomb. As New York City recovered from the shock of what seemed like a major car bomb attack on its main landmark, officials gave a final casualty figure of five dead and 1,042 injured — the vast majority from inhaling smoke as they struggled down stairwells to safety. New York Governor Mario Cuomo said the city felt "violated" by the tragedy. President Clinton, in his weekly national radio address from Washington, pledged, "working together, we'll find out who was involved and why this happened." Mr. Clinton said he had assured Governor Cuomo and New York Mayor David Dinkins "that the full measure of federal law enforcement resources will be brought to bear on this investigation." New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said the blast — which wrecked three underground floors below the World Trade Centre and sent smoke swirling up 96 floors — had the hallmarks of a bomb. (Earlier story on page 8)

Sudan, Egypt end talks; no sign of progress

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese and Egyptian officials have ended five days of talks about a disputed border area without making any apparent progress. The official Sudanese news agency SUNA said late Friday a joint commitment which has been meeting here since Monday concluded sessions, agreeing to meet again in Cairo at a later unspecified date. The two neighbours both claim the Halaib triangle, a remote, desert area bordering the Red Sea. The 40-year-old dispute flared again last year when Sudan tendered oil exploration rights there to a Canadian oil firm. SUNA said both sides affirmed their commitment to the mutual interest of the peoples of the two countries. It gave no further details. The joint committee meeting was attended by lower-ranking officials than two previous sessions last year, and was delayed for a month by political tension between the two states. Egypt accuses Sudan's Islamic rulers of encouraging Muslim militants in Egypt and is suspicious of Khartoum's relationship with Iran.

PLO official to Moscow for talks

TUNIS (R) — Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee, is expected to go to Moscow soon for talks on the Middle East peace negotiations. PLO officials said Saturday, Russia and the United States, the co-sponsors of the peace talks, said Thursday the Middle East parties are to be invited to resume talks in April. But the PLO said invitations would be premature unless Israel complies with a U.N. resolution calling for the return of the all 415 Palestinians expelled to Lebanon in December. The decision to send Mr. Abbas to Moscow came after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat received a message Friday from the Russian leaders.

Israeli soldiers wound comrade

RAMALLAH, occupied West Bank (R) — Soldiers from an Israeli army undercover unit accidentally shot and wounded one of their comrades in the occupied West Bank town of Ramallah Saturday, Palestinian and Israeli military officials said. The incident occurred after Palestinian youths erected a roadblock and stoned an Israeli army vehicle. Soldiers from the undercover unit chased a youth, running at him from different directions. They opened fire, missed him and instead hit one of their comrades, Palestinian witnesses said. Israeli military officials said the soldier was wounded in the ankle after another soldier tripped during the chase, causing his gun to go off accidentally. There was "a 20-minute shooting spree" before the soldiers drove off in jeeps, firing their weapons, a witness said. No Palestinians were injured.

Kurdish violence kills 7 in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Five people were killed in two attacks by separatist Kurds in southeast Turkey and another two were found dead, local journalists said. They said the bullet-riddled bodies of two Kurdish human rights activists abducted by gunmen two weeks ago, were found under a bridge near the town of Tunceli in eastern Turkey. Rebel Kurds shot dead a suspected member of a rival group and his two sons as they were leaving their home in the town of Silvan, in southeast Turkey.

Kuwait army chief resigns — reports

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait army Chief of Staff General Jaber Al Khaled Al Sabah has resigned and will be replaced by his deputy, newspapers said Saturday. Al Anba newspaper said his resignation was accepted and he was appointed consultant at the office of Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah. "A decree appointing General Ali Al Momen (as chief of staff) is expected," the newspaper added. A Defence Ministry spokesman declined comment on the report. Al Watan newspaper said Gen. Jaber submitted his resignation last week. Gen. Momen, who now serves as deputy chief of staff, was the strongest candidate for the army's top job, it added. The newspaper gave no reason for the resignation.

Suspect group disowns Cairo cafe blast

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's main Muslim militant organisation denied on Saturday that it bombed a crowded Cairo coffee bar, killing six people and wounding 16. Al Jama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic group), which has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on foreign tourists in the last five months, issued the denial in a fax and a telephone call to an international news agency. "With regard to the explosion which occurred on Friday in a coffee bar in Tahrir Square and in view of the attempt of the Egyptian press to attribute the incident to Gama'a Al Islamiya, the ma'a denies that it had any connection with the incident other than on far," the statement said. The bomb attack was the most serious in Cairo for years (See page 2).

Washington works on Israeli-Palestinian deal

CAIRO (R) — The United States is trying to nudge Israel and the Palestinians into a six-point deal to resume stalled Middle East peace talks. Palestinian sources said Saturday. The proposals were assembled by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his visit last week to occupied Jerusalem, where he met Palestinians and Israelis in an attempt to end the dispute over 415 expelled Palestinians and revive the talks. The sources said the points were:

- A U.S. statement that expulsions are illegal and a U.S. commitment that Israel will implement fully U.N. Resolution 799, which calls for immediate return of all the remaining 396 Palestinians it expelled to Lebanon on Dec. 17.
- A U.S. commitment that the next round of peace negotiations in Washington will focus clearly on U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 and that the status of Jerusalem can be discussed.
- The two resolutions enshrine the principle that Israel should withdraw from land seized in the 1967 Middle East war in return for peace and has been the main basis of 16 months of talks between Israel, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians.
- Israel has not accepted that Resolution 242 applies to the talks with the Palestinians, which cover an interim period of self-rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. It says 242 applies to negotiations on the final status of the territories, which are to take place later.
- A "binding commitment" from Israel not to carry out any

future expulsions. — The accelerated return of the evictees "in compliance with" Resolution 799. — Return of a sizeable number of other Palestinians expelled since 1967. — Agreement by Israel to stop human rights violations in the occupied territories. They said Mr. Christopher told the Palestinians after he saw Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for two hours that Israel had agreed "in principle" to the proposals and that details and a final text would be negotiated with U.S. officials. The Israelis had objected to the wording of some of the proposals. They had rejected the phrases "binding commitment" and "compliance" with Resolution 799. They also objected to the inclusion of Jerusalem, which Israel has declared its "eternal capital," in the proposals.

The Palestinians wanted a definite timetable for the "accelerated return" of the evictees and a guarantee that they would all be home before the planned resumption of peace talks in April. The Palestinians also sought a specific declaration that Israel would end human rights violations in the Gaza Strip. "The Israelis did not say they are refusing the proposals but they are demanding a change in the wording of the text. But the changes the Israelis were suggesting are not acceptable to us. They are in violation of what we think is an agreement," one Palestinian official said. "There is a murkiness. The disagreement appears textual but

in fact it is political," he added. The Palestinian sources said the U.S. consul-general in Arab East Jerusalem, Molly Williamson, was holding meetings with the two sides to try to reach agreement. They said Mr. Christopher's invitation in Brussels to all parties to resume negotiations on April had been made because he really believed a solution had been near.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Arab states and Palestinian peace negotiators insist there can be no more talks until the expelled crisis is solved. In Amman, PLO envoys discussed the U.S. proposals to end the plight of the evictees with members of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas.

The Friday meeting was the first high level contact between the two sides since late December, when a Hamas team went to Tunis for rare talks with the PLO on the expellees. Hamas, the PLO's main rival in the occupied territories, is at the core of hardline Palestinian opposition to Arab-Israeli peace talks. Many Hamas supporters were among those expelled to South Lebanon. Mamdouh Nofal, an envoy of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, attended the talks with two other members of the PLO's mainstream movement Fatah. "We also discussed with Hamas whether they had ideas and suggestions on the deportees issue, and they said they had none," he said. In Tunis, the PLO called for an

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Exiles bank on Syria to block peace talks

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (R) — Palestinian exiles said Saturday they were banking on Syria to block any resumption of Middle East peace talks before Israel took them back. "I am confident Syria will convince all the Arab states not to resume the negotiations before the issue of the (expellees) is resolved," Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, leader of the 396 exiles, told Reuters at the group's makeshift tent camp in South Lebanon. The men have been stranded between Israel and Lebanon since 1967. Syria, emerging as spokesman for the Arab negotiators, said Friday it was calling a meeting of all Arab parties in the peace talks to forge a united stand on the two issues of the evictees and relaunching talks, stalled since the expulsions.

Sudanese minister says elections early next year

DUBAI (R) — Sudan will hold general and presidential elections by the beginning of next year and the ruling military junta will step down sooner than originally planned, a Sudanese cabinet minister said. "Parliamentary and presidential elections will be held by the beginning of next year," Justice Minister and Attorney-General Abdul Aziz Shidu told Al Wasat Arabic language weekly in an interview published Sunday. He said the ruling Revolution Command Council (RCC), which came to power in a coup in 1989, will "cease to exist" after the elections, handing its powers over to the elected parliament and government. RCC chief and head of state Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, replying to growing speculation that the RCC would step down early, said last month the council had no plans to step down soon. He stressed an earlier schedule under which the RCC would give up power after national and presidential elections set for late 1994 or early 1995. Mr. Shidu told the London-based weekly only individuals would run in the elections, reiterating that Sudan will not return to the multi-party democracy which

the ruling junta replaced. He also dismissed as fiction reports by international human rights groups that Khartoum was involved in mass killings in the remote Nuba mountains. Mr. Shidu denied charges by secular-oriented Arab states that Sudan's Islamic government arms and supports Muslim fundamentalist groups active in Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. In another interview, al Wasat quoted Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui as saying Sudan "continues to harbour terrorist camps and provides them with different kinds of help and support."

Mr. Karoui said Tunis reserves the right to refer the issue of Sudan's and Iran's alleged training of Muslim zealots to the United Nations' Security Council. Mr. Shidu said: "We have nothing to do with what is happening in Tunisia. Sudan has never interfered in the internal affairs of Tunisia."

Sudan, in a move which has angered several Arab states worried that Tehran is attempting to export its Islamic revolution, has openly courted Iran in the past two years, isolating itself within the Arab World.

Palestinian delegates under strain

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Strains are developing among Palestinian peace negotiators and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as Washington puts pressure on them to accept a compromise to revive U.S.-backed Middle East peace talks. Palestinian delegates are anxious to restart the talks, but their return to Washington without concessions from Israel on the fate of about 400 Palestinians expelled to Lebanon in December would outrage the Palestinian public.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher put more pressure on the delegates Thursday by saying invitations to a new round of talks in April would be issued soon. Mr. Christopher had won backing from Syria and Lebanon to go ahead with talks without settling the evictee issue. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat also is uncertain about the U.S. compromise offer, according to sources in Tunis, the PLO headquarters.

On the one hand, he does not want the peace talks to resume without the participation of Palestinians and the PLO. But he also believes the PLO should reconcile with Hamas, the Islamic fundamentalist group. Hamas opposes the talks, and moving ahead with them without settling the evictee issue would kill any chance for reconciliation. The expelled Hamas supporters have become heroes in the occupied territories. Even before the expulsions, the PLO was losing favour among Palestinians because the peace talks were going nowhere.

Among the Palestinian delegates, one camp would accept a compromise allowing Israel to concede on issues other than the exiles. Others want implementation of a U.N. resolution demanding the return of the evictees. "Each party is pulling the rope in its own direction," said Riyad Malki, who belongs to a PLO faction that opposes peace talks altogether.

PLO sources in Tunis said Faisal Hussein, chief adviser to the delegation, has argued for going to the talks at any cost, then raising the evictee issue in the

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Israeli soldiers prepare artillery shells Saturday as the Israeli army responded to 60 rockets fired from Lebanon that landed in northern Israel and the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon (AFP photo)

Jordan confident solution would be found to end peace talks deadlock

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan remains confident that a solution to the crisis sparked by Israel's expulsion of Palestinians in December would be found soon to put the Middle East peace process back on track, senior officials said Saturday. "A lot of things could happen between now and April," said a senior official. "We are confident that things would work out positively and a solution to the expellee crisis acceptable to all parties would be reached by then." The U.S. and Russia, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991, said Thursday that the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks would be held in Washington in April and invitations would be sent out soon. The official, who preferred anonymity, noted that the Arab parties to the peace talks with Israel would be meeting soon to discuss how to relaunch the peace process and said a solution to the expellee crisis could emerge from the gathering. The official indicated that Jordan, while remaining very much committed to the peace process, had a broader view of the expellee crisis. "Notwithstanding its emotional and political aspects, the latest crisis cannot be seen in isolation of the fact that millions of Palestinians are exiled," said the official. "We cannot lose sight of the

reality that the peace process aims at resolving the root conflict."

In the meantime, Jordan has adopted a non-committal approach to Thursday's American-Russian announcement of an April round of talks.

"We will consider the invitation when it is actually issued," said Foreign Minister Kamel Abn Jaber.

Dr. Abu Jaber said the Arab meeting on the peace process would be held in Damascus in the first week of March.

"We are awaiting definite details of plans for the meeting," Dr. Abu Jaber told the Jordan Times Saturday.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa said in Brussels Friday that the meeting would seek to "come up with a united Arab position vis-a-vis the (expellees) and the resumption of the peace process."

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and his Russian counterpart Andrei Kozyrev said in a joint statement in Geneva Thursday that "the Israelis, Arabs and Palestinians have reaffirmed their strong commitment to the peace process and emphasised their determination to resume the negotiations in the near future."

The U.S. and Russia "are convinced that at this point all sides must take additional steps to realise a historic opportunity to make progress towards a comprehensive, just and lasting Arab-Israeli

peace settlement based on (U.N. Security Council) resolutions 242 and 338," the statement said.

Accordingly, the co-sponsors will soon extend invitations to the ninth round of negotiations to be held in Washington during the month of April," it added.

Reports in the Israeli press said Mr. Christopher was suggesting April 19 as the possible date for the resumption of the peace talks.

Mr. Christopher also said in Geneva after meeting with Mr. Sharaa that Syria had pledged its support for the American bid to restart the peace talks. Mr. Sharaa said shortly thereafter that his country would take a constructive position to the expellee crisis since a solution was needed to enable all parties to resume the peace talks "in a comfortable and agreeable atmosphere." He did not comment on the announcement that invitations to the April round of talks would be going out soon.

The last round of bilaterals concluded in Washington on Dec. 17, with the Arabs staying away on the last day in protest against Israel's expulsion of over 400 Palestinians to South Lebanon. During a visit to the Middle East last week, Mr. Christopher pushed a compromise formula to entice the Arabs back to the negotiating table, but the formula was rejected by the Palestinians, who also described Thursday's

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Volley of rockets hit Israeli and allied posts

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — Resistance fighters fired more than 24 rockets at northern Israel early Saturday, security sources said. They said the salvos were fired as artillery and rocket duels raged between Hizbollah guerrillas and Israeli and allied forces in South Lebanon.

The Israeli army said earlier several Katyusha rockets were fired at northern Galilee, causing little damage, but no casualties. The sources said Hizbollah guerrillas also fired rockets and dozens of mortar bombs at Israel's self-styled "security zone" and Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia gunners slammed more than 150 shells at areas north of the zone.

The Israeli shelling engulfed Iqlim Al Tushaf, the southern edge of the eastern Bekaa Valley and villages around the market town of Nabatieh. The whooshing sound of rockets and the blast kept most of the region's estimated 200,000 residents huddled in basements and bomb shelters.

The rockets, the sources said, were fired from the vicinity of Yater, a traditional Hizbollah stronghold above the "security zone." They hit and damaged a number of houses in the towns of Marjayoun, Khatam and Ibil Al Saqi.

The duels followed an attack Friday by Israeli helicopters in which a one-storey house used by Hizbollah members was destroyed. No one was hurt in the attack because the house was vacant at the time.

Earlier Friday, three SLA militiamen were wounded in an ambush by unidentified guerrillas.

The latest round of violence between Israel and SLA on the one hand, and Hizbollah and its allies on the other, is now in its third week.

Hizbollah (Party of God) has stepped up attacks on Israeli and SLA forces since late January to mark the first anniversary of the killing of its chief Sheikh Abbas Musawi, his wife and son in an Israeli helicopter ambush in February 1992.

Two Israeli soldiers, three SLA militiamen, 10 guerrillas and four civilians have been killed in the South Lebanon violence during the past five weeks.

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Afghan demonstrators demand pay and food

KABUL (R) — Hundreds of angry Afghan government employees and merchants demonstrated outside the presidential palace and the U.N. offices in Kabul Saturday demanding salaries halted by months of fierce factional fighting.

But an unofficial temporary ceasefire between the Hezb-e-Islami group and the government held for a 14th day despite sporadic overnight outbreaks of rocket and gun fire, and a former top Pakistani official continued mediation efforts.

"Give us our pay," chanted about 300 people, mostly government employees, braving freezing weather to stage the third such protest in four days.

Another 300 gathered outside the United Nations office in the shell-shattered Afghan capital to demand foreign assistance for their plight. "Other countries must listen to us," shouted one angry man, who gave his name only as Mohammad. "The United Nations is a humanitarian organisation, they must help the people."

The Mujahedeen administration that took over from the former communist government last April has virtually collapsed after months of bloody battles between rival factions fighting for power in Kabul.

"The government is cheating us," said Mohammad. He said the government was unable to honour state-issued food coupons due to mounting shortages in the capital.

Ited from the communist government a system of coupons given to government employees to obtain free sugar, flour, edible oil and tea.

Prices of food and fuel have soared, especially in the latest fighting in January and February between fundamentalist president Burhanuddin Rabbani and his hardline Hezb-e-Islami opponents that has killed 1,000 people and injured 6,000.

The merchants complained they could not withdraw money they had deposited in the banks for safekeeping on the advice of the government since the banks had run out of funds.

"They promise us everything and give us nothing," one said. "There are some enthusiastic commanders who have violated the courtesy truce," said Hamid Gul, retired chief of Pakistan's military intelligence and strategist of much of the Mujahedeen's 14-year war of resistance, who negotiated the ceasefire.

"We are hopeful the leaders are moving in a positive direction."

Disident Hezb chief Gulbudin Hekmatyar said by radio from his base at Charasyab, southeast of Kabul, that he was ready to accept an interim government established by mutual understanding by all parties to end the fighting.

Hezb-e-Islami could accept any leader as head of such an interim government, including his arch rival Rabbani. "We suggest the president should also be neutral," he said.

Somali peace panel agrees on conference

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Representatives of Somalia's warring factions ended preparatory peace talks Saturday and agreed to attend a national reconciliation conference next month which diplomats hope will chart a path to peace.

"The meeting has ended and they have reached full agreement on holding the national conference," Farouk Mawlawi, U.N. spokesman in Somalia, told Reuters.

He said full details on the agreement would be made available on Sunday.

The panel representing Somalia's 15 warring factions met behind closed doors in Mogadishu to hammer out an agenda and a guest list for the conference planned for March 15 in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

The panel suspended discussions begun Tuesday after riots rocked Mogadishu, followed by heavy gunbattles Thursday.

The U.S. military command announced Saturday that two U.S. soldiers, one of them a woman, were wounded when unknown gunmen opened fire near Mogadishu port on Friday night. Both soldiers were reported in stable condition.

Shortly after the talks, Somalia's so-called Interim President Ali Mahdi Mobammad criticised his rival, Mogadishu warlord Mohammad Farah Aidedee, for instigating the worst violence since a U.S.-led task force landed in December under a U.N. mandate.

"I would like to state emphatically my total disagreement to these types of manoeuvres which will create an obstacle to national reconciliation and if not arrested on time will lead the country into total chaos," Mr. Ali Mahdi said in a letter to the United Nations obtained by Reuters.

A separate statement signed by 11 factions loosely aligned with Mr. Ali Mahdi accused General Aidedee of "baseless and irrational accusations against the international peace keeping forces in Somalia."

"We, the eleven parties, who have always supported and welcomed restoration of peace and stability in Somalia, are categorically against Aidedee's attempt to restore anarchy and create political tension."

The gunbattles followed street protests Tuesday and Wednesday by Gen. Aidedee's supporters after he accused U.S. troops of backing his rival, Mohammad Said Hersi, known as Gen. Morgan.

U.S. troops, who head a 33,000-strong force from 23 nations deployed to stop looting of food aid for the starving, deny the charge.

Nigerian troops unleashed machinegun fire and stormed a building after snipers fired at them. But U.S. officials said recent violence would not delay their withdrawal.

Calm returned to the rest of the capital Friday after the riots

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Iraq accepts long-term U.N. monitoring

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq insisted Friday it had nothing more to hide and declared it was ready to accept long-term U.N. monitoring of its compliance with Gulf war ceasefire terms.

It also denied threatening to shoot down a U.N. helicopter carrying weapons inspectors.

The head of the Military Industrialisation Commission which oversaw development of Iraq's ballistic missiles, chemical weapons and nuclear programme also called on the Security Council to stop lightning weapons inspections.

Two U.N. teams joined forces Monday and swooped on three sites west of Baghdad. They were searching for undeclared mobile launchers or missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres forbidden under the ceasefire terms.

"The fact is not that they found nothing," commission chairman Lieutenant-General Amer Rasheed told Reuters in an interview. "There is nothing left for them to find."

He declared: "We are ready for the long term monitoring. We are committed to implement (it) with the aim of not going back to the prohibited activity."

"We are committed to it (monitoring). This has become a subject of the past according to us," he said. "The subject is over."

Gen. Rasheed also denied United Nations charges that Iraq twice threatened to shoot down a U.N. helicopter trying to fly over one of the three inspection sites Monday and trained anti-aircraft guns on the craft.

"There was no threat at all. They (the guns) were never trained," he said.

The U.N. helicopter was approaching "certain security sensitive positions over which flying is forbidden in accordance to international norms," he added.

An accompanying Iraqi helicopter notified the U.N. craft not

to "trespass ...and keep away from (these positions)."

He said the Iraqi leadership had issued orders for the implementation of the U.N. Gulf war ceasefire Resolution 687 "in a positive and constructive way."

The resolution ordered the dismantling under U.N. supervision of Iraq's Scud missiles and weapons of mass destruction and long-term U.N. monitoring of its compliance.

However, Gen. Rasheed said certain parties were trying to prevent the New U.S. administration of President Bill Clinton from taking an objective view of Baghdad's stand.

Some U.N. inspections were "unjustifiable" and carried out "in a provocative manner and based on misleading information," he said. He urged the U.N. special commission dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction not "to yield to pressure from hostile parties."

But he insisted: "Iraqi guns where not trained against the planes of the special commission. They were never trained on the helicopters. They did not pose a threat to them."

He said the head of the U.N. aerial inspection told the Iraqi side Sunday that "the special commission had no intention ...of approaching sites."

But Gen. Rasheed said he had ordered anti-aircraft gunners defending the positions "not to fire on the planes even if they approached the sensitive sites."

Gen. Rasheed, 54, an electronics engineer with a doctorate of philosophy from London University, called on the U.N. to put an end to such inspections whose "purpose is to harm the Iraqi people and create excuses for the continuation of their suffering."

He said the U.N. sent more than 30 inspection teams to Iraq in 1992. "They inspected bridges, canals, bakeries, meat stores, silos, horse fields and sports clubs," he said.

Israel, Palestinians should take 'practical' steps to peace, group says

By Berta Gomez
USIA Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Despite the stall in the Mideast peace process, Israelis and Palestinians should take preparatory steps towards a period of interim self-government in the occupied territories, according to an American-Palestinian study group convened by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Israel, in particular, needs to ease its control over virtually all aspects of Palestinian life, and allow the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to rebuild the civic, political and financial institutions that have decayed under 25 years of occupation.

"We felt that even during the negotiating period there is a lot that the Israeli government could do that would start to create a better atmosphere between the two peoples," Ann Mosely Lesch, principal author of the report, told a Feb. 25 gathering sponsored by the Middle East Institute.

Israeli authorities, for example, could ease travel restrictions on most Palestinians; halt "punitive" seizures of Palestinian property; restructure the tax code; and supply municipalities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the data they need to carry out medium- and long-term planning for basic infrastructure development.

Not only would such steps improve Israeli-Palestinian relations, but they would also enhance the quality of the Palestinian institutions that will be essential to a successful transition period, she pointed out.

Ms. Lesch, assistant director of

the Centre for Arab and Islamic studies at Villanova University, said the report grew out of a two-year study that began soon after the Gulf war. The other members of the group were Jeffrey Boutwell, Naomi Chazan, Mahdi Abdul Hadi, Ruth Kilov, Everett Mendelsohn, Fouad Moughrabli, Salim Tamari, Shibley Telhami and Mark Tessler.

Palestinian civil life has suffered under Israeli occupation, and the group identified areas where reforms should be adopted quickly. Residents of the occupied territories, for example, should be allowed to form political parties, labour unions and charities, to have a free press and to organise public gatherings, Ms. Lesch said.

In light of continuing conflicts over how much power the interim government would have, Ms. Lesch said that any peace agreement should spell out the government's authority with great specificity. Palestinians would want the interim government to be their sole governing authority, but Israel would never accept such an agreement, on the grounds that such a government would also be able to declare total independence from one day to the next.

The group agreed that the Israeli military government ought to function as "a residual military presence that would be gradually phased out" over the five-year interim period, after which a final status for the territories would be decided, Ms. Lesch said.

For its part, the Palestinian governing body would need basic powers, including the ability to formulate public policy; levy taxes and regulate finances; con-

Palestinian delegates under strain

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negotiations. The sources, who insisted on anonymity, said delegation leader Haidar Abdul Shafi opposes Mr. Hussein's position.

Mr. Malki thinks the argument could lead to the resignation of Dr. Abdul Shafi, but those in the delegation play down the differences. Delegate Samir Abdullah refers to them as "two ways of thought," rather than a split.

The Palestinians have pushed for Israel to stop expulsions as well as practices such as jailing without charge and destroying homes of suspected activists, both used often in the five-year Palestinian uprising.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, who is from the Gaza Strip where anger at the expulsions is most bitter, fears the delegates will lose their credi-

Washington works on compromise

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urgent meeting of Arab foreign ministers and an Islamic summit to discuss the "dangers" to the Palestinian cause and the Jerusalem issue.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa said Mr. Arafat sent urgent messages to King Hassan of Morocco, chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, Senegalese President Abdou Diouf, current chairman of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, and Arab

Exiles bank on Syria to block talks

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Mr. Christopher said on Thursday after a one-week Middle East tour that invitations to a new round of negotiations in Washington in April would be sent to all parties to the talks.

After meeting Mr. Christopher, Sharaa announced an



The body of an unidentified Swedish tourist lies in front of a coffee shop in Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo Friday night after an explosion in the cafe (AFP photo)

Bomb explodes in Cairo coffee-shop; four killed

CAIRO (R) — An explosion that ripped through a crowded coffee shop in central Cairo Friday night and killed four people, including two foreigners, was caused by a bomb, security sources said Saturday.

They said the device had been made out of TNT packed in a bottle which had then been wrapped in a leather jacket to disguise it.

It was the most serious extremist attack in Cairo for many years. There was no immediate indication of who might have been responsible, although security sources said police had picked up 36 people for questioning.

Muslim militants fighting to turn Egypt into a purist Islamic state have shot at tourist buses in the southern Nile valley and thrown small explosive devices at buses in Cairo.

The main militant organisation, Al Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Group) has warned foreigners to stay out of the capital and parts of Upper Egypt to avoid being caught in violence.

But Friday's attack involved a much larger bomb than the militants have used previously and the target was not purely foreign.

The traditional coffee shop, which looks across central Cairo's main square to the Egyptian museum, Hilton Hotel and Foreign Ministry, was popular with young foreigners. But most of the customers were Egyptians.

Police and hospital sources said 20 people had been injured: 12 Egyptians, two Americans, two Somalis, a Canadian, a Saudi, a Turk and a Frenchman.

The state-owned newspaper Al Gomhuria quoted Cairo's police chief, General Rida Abdul Aziz, as saying initial investigations showed a bomb had been a home-made device "of the type used by terrorists."

The newspaper quoted a security source as saying the fuse of the

Iran's hardline revolutionaries look inwards

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

TEHRAN — A sign at the reception desk of Salaam newspaper shows why it is a different kind of daily: "Dear brother, please hand in your weapons."

The newspaper has been the only public voice of the Islamic republic's most stalwart revolutionaries since President Hashemi Rafsanjani engineered their defeat in last April's parliamentary elections.

But Salaam, like much of Iran, has gradually shifted gears. Gone are the strident slogans about punching the West in the face and exporting the revolution. Instead, the paper focuses on solutions for economic and social problems that many believe will be the test of whether the Islamic revolution succeeds.

"We can't be very optimistic and say it's in a hopeful situation right now," Abbas Abdi, the paper's 36-year-old editor, said in an interview.

"At the start of the revolution people had false ideals. They had a vision of what people think will be brotherhood, peace in society, no deception, and this is not what happens. In reality we are like everyone else."

Since the election, the newspaper has made a crusade out of highlighting unimplemented laws as well as the daily problems of ordinary Iranians.

Recent articles criticised the tacit ban on political parties despite their legality under the constitution, the wretched services at Iran's airports, and insufficient Iranian news coverage of Muslim conflicts in other countries, such as Afghanistan. A scathing analysis of the proposed budget said parliament lied to balance earnings and spending.

The newspaper said its 70,000 circulation puts it third among the city's seven dailies.

"It has become more social, less political since the election. When you are a political party and your opposition is ruling the country, you have to find the weak points," said Kiyomars Saderi, editor of the satiric weekly Ghotaga.

Other editors are more sarcastic.

"They have expressed freely that we are not free," noted Mohammad Sarafraz, editor of the mainstream Resalat daily.

Salaam's publisher, Hojatoleslam Musavi Khoehi, was the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's representative to the students who seized the U.S. embassy in 1979 and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.

He turned down an interview request, but Mr. Abdi denied any direct link between Salaam and the revolution's radical proponents.

However, Salaam raised eyebrows last year by publishing the memoirs of Hojatoleslam Sadeq Khalkhali, who is known as the "hanging judge" for the many execution orders he issued and who bragged about personally killing one of the Shah's prime ministers, Abbas Hoveida.

"No one but Salaam would publish Khalkhali. Why shouldn't we?" Mr. Abdi said.

But he was quick to disclaim any connection with the writing.

"It had some disadvantages because it was exaggerated, it was too emotional and too sentimental," the editor said.

He said Hojatoleslam Khalkhali does not visit the paper, nor do other leading radicals who have dropped from public view including Mehdi Karubi, the former parliament speaker, and Ali Akbar Mohtashami, former interior minister and mentor to Lebanon's militant Shiite groups.

Chances of a political comeback were distant, he said.

"It depends on whether they have new thoughts and new ideas but I highly doubt it. They don't feel like coming into politics," Mr. Abdi said.

The group retains a powerful following among mid-level bureaucrats they put in the government during the late 1980s. They have been able to stall the privatisation campaign, for example.

But even among the most ardent supporters of the revolution, like the Baseej volunteers who vow to die for Islam, calls for exporting the revolution get little echo.

New Cyprus government seen pursuing U.N. talks

NICOSIA (R) — Cyprus President-elect Glafos Clerides has appointed a trusted lieutenant as foreign minister and diplomats predict a moderate approach in efforts to end the island's division.

Mr. Clerides, who named his 11-member cabinet late Thursday night, gave five posts to the hard-line Democratic Party.

The party's support in the second round of the presidential elections, held only in the internationally recognised southern two-thirds of the island, gave him a narrow majority over incumbent George Vassiliou.

But Mr. Clerides picked two senior officials from his own right-wing Democratic Rally party for the posts of foreign affairs and finance.

New Foreign Minister Alecos Michaelides, a former speaker of the house of representatives, is seen as a moderate who favours U.N.-sponsored talks with Turkish Cypriots and says he would seek greater involvement of the European Community (EC) in the negotiating process.

"We think it is an extremely good choice," one Western diplomat told Reuters. "He will present a good image of Cyprus."

U.N.-sponsored talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots over the future of the island, divided since Turkish troops occupied its northern third in 1974, reached deadlock in November.

The two sides are discussing a draft plan drawn up by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to reunite Cyprus as a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation.

Mr. Clerides, who will be sworn in Sunday, says fundamental aspects of the plan are unacceptable and that he will seek disengagement from its negative points. He has said he would be willing to resume nego-

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Reves d'enfants
17:40	Les Cles de Port Bouard
17:50	News French
18:05	Le Journal de L'histoire
18:20	News in Hebrew
18:30	News in Arabic
18:40	Who's the Boss
18:50	Documentary
19:00	News in English
19:10	Simon and Simon
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifich	
Tel: 637400	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.	
637855	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634591	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	
637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622566	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	
623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 638511	
Tel. 625431	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.	
771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.	
775261	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel.	
685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.	
843526	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-	
Day Saints Tel. 832041, 649332	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
PRAYER TIMES	
6:44	Fair
6:50	(Sunrise) Dula
11:48	Dhuhr
15:03	'Asr
17:35	Maghrib
18:52	'Isha
WEATHER	
Bullish supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
Slight rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be light and variable changing to northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.	
Amman	Min./Max. temp.
Aqaba	8 / 20
Deserts	15 / 28
Jordan Valley	10 / 24
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 17, Aqaba 24, Humidity readings: Amman 70 per cent, Aqaba 54 per cent.	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ramzi Mizawi	694788
Dr. Salim Daboub	776751
Dr. Mohammad Al Nabawi	699225
Dr. Khalid Mu'add	743300
Firas pharmacy	661912
Fordown pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Natrouk pharmacy	626672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847623
First circle pharmacy	813141
Samir pharmacy	661898
Talal pharmacy	621366
Al Asma pharmacy	624425
Al Azmout pharmacy	777121
Al Azmout pharmacy	388661
Hisham pharmacy	771957
BRID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Ta'ani	737711
Alqado pharmacy	(-)
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	08-33200
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	102, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605890
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	010230
(Directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Repairs	623101
HOSPITALS	
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Water Authority	774111
Radiology	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-33200
Qasbi Alla Int. Airport	08-33200
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)52200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:30	Aqaba (RJ)
09:30	Jeddah (RJ)
09:30	Lamaca (RJ)
09:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:15	Bahrain (RJ)
10:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:45	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
11:00	London (RJ)
11:15	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
11:30	Athens (RJ)
11:45	Frankfurt (RJ)
12:00	Rome (RJ)
12:15	Vienna (RJ)
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Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
08:30	Beirut, Rome (AZ)
10:15	Beirut, Rome (AZ)
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10:45	Beirut, Rome (AZ)
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28:00	Beirut, Rome (AZ

Royal Decree approves security law amendment

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree was issued Saturday approving an amendment to the State Security Court Law and stating that the amendment would go into effect by March 1, after it has been published in the Official Gazette.

The amendment, approved by the Houses of Parliament, allows convicted persons by the State Security Court to appeal the verdict within 30 days of the date of the ruling.

The right to such appeal had been one of the key demands by Jordanian political activists, as well as Arab and international human rights organisations, who saw it as an essential component of a judiciary system which ensures the right to a fair trial.

According to the law, the State Security Court examines those issues related to state security — externally and internally — and matters connected with the security of Jordanian citizens and the protection of their social and economic interests.

The amendment makes it obligatory to refer to the Court of Cassation death penalty or 10-year imprisonment sentences.

The ruling of the Court of Cassation, over which five judges preside, is considered final according to law.

Another Royal Decree issued Saturday approved a Council of Ministers decision that Jordan establish diplomatic relations with five Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union; Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

A Jordanian delegation recently toured five republics and signed initial agreements for the establishment of diplomatic ties with each republic.

A third Royal Decree approved a Council of Ministers decision taken last May on the exchange of diplomatic envoys with the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Jordanian Ambassador residing in Kazakhstan will be the non-resident ambassador to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

A fourth Royal Decree approved a Council of Ministers decision to appoint Jordan's ambassador to Pakistan as a non-resident ambassador to Tajikistan and the ambassador serving in Turkey as non-resident ambassador to Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King receives congratulatory cable from Senegal

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received a cable from Senegalese President Abdou Diouf congratulating him on the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan. President Diouf wished King Hussein a continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people progress and prosperity.

Princess Basma visits scouts, guides in Balqa

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday visited the boy scouts and girl guides centres in Balqa Governorate where she inspected the activities of the Third Annual Charity Campaign carried out by the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) during the Holy Month of Ramadan. A total of 1,500 boy scouts and girl guides from these centres are participating in the campaign by gathering citizens' contributions from various parts of the governorate.

Cabinet approves six new courts

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday approved the establishment of six new courts in various parts of the Kingdom. A first instance court will be established in Ajloun district and five peace courts will be established in Al Husseinyeh sub-district, Ayy district in Al Karak Governorate, Dhiban near Madaba, Ain Al Basha in Al Balqa Governorate and Al Ruweished district in Al Mafraq Governorate.

House takes up temporary education law

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday will resume discussion of the Temporary Education Law No. 27 for 1988. The House will also refer the 1990 economic crimes draft law, which was rejected by the Senate, to its Judiciary Committee.

Widad Kavar receives medal

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Yanal Hikmat Saturday presented Widad Kavar Al Istiklal Medal of the Third Order which was recently conferred on her by His Majesty King Hussein in recognition of her efforts in Jordanian folkloric research and support for the activities of the Ministry of Tourism. Mrs. Kavar participated with the Ministry of Tourism in displaying her large collection of traditional Jordanian and Palestinian costumes in several countries, including Japan, Germany, France and Britain.

Ministry to set up group to protect ozone layer

AMMAN (Petra) — The Environment Department at the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment will establish a national committee to protect the ozone layer. Department Director Saleh Al Sharaa said, Dr. Sharaa said the ministry has already set up an executive committee to supervise and follow-up plans and projects aiming to combat the use of ozone-depleting materials. He said that a team from the World Bank concluded a visit to Jordan Friday after holding talks with Jordanian officials on the use of substitutes for ozone-depleting materials. Dr. Sharaa said the delegation has reviewed Jordan's national plans in this regard.

Al Koura wins health award

DEIR ABBE SAIED (Petra) — Al Koura Health Department received Saturday a prize from the Ministry of Health after it won first place among other departments in the Kingdom for services it offers to mothers and children. Director of the Health Department Jamal Al Sharmarh voiced his hope that the prize will be an incentive for employees at the department to develop their performance.

5 killed in road accidents

AMMAN (Petra) — Five people were killed and 174 others injured in 395 car accidents in various parts of Jordan during the third week of February, the Traffic Department announced. The department said the number of accidents during this week dropped by 31 compared to the week before.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by four Arab artists from the United States — Ghada Jazal, Helen Khul, Suha Noorist and Afaf Zurayk — at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery in Jabal Amman, between the First and Second Circles (10 a.m. - 4 p.m.).
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Iraqi artist Mohammad Fakher at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artists Mohammad Fradi and Jaber Mejbai at Alfa Art Gallery.

MUSICAL THEATRE

- ★ Musical entitled "Mame" at the American Centre at 2 p.m.

Government to update study on poverty

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government plans to conduct a study to determine the number of families living at or below the poverty line, based on statistics collected to the end of 1992.

An official statement Saturday said Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker approved the composition of a committee charged with conducting the study.

The statement said socio-economic conditions and geographic dimensions will be taken into consideration.

The committee, to be chaired by Ministry of Social Development Secretary General, Mohammad Sqour, groups representatives of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), the Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Social Development, the Audit Bureau and the Ministry of Labour.

The survey will be the first since 1991 when the Ministry of Social Development revealed that at least 20,000 families in Jordan lived in absolute poverty.

The 1991 study confirmed an earlier survey conducted by the Amman office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which found that no less than 33 per cent of Jordanians lived below the poverty line.

The statement Saturday said the committee will depend on surveys conducted on employment, unemployment, the number of returning Jordanian expatriates from the Gulf in the last three years, the 1991 Ministry of Social Development survey, the

average expenditure of Jordanian households in 1992, as carried out by the Department of Statistics, in addition to other sources and data.

According to the statement, the committee will finish the study within a month.

The 1991 Ministry of Social Development study concluded that families with a maximum income of JD70 per month were considered below the poverty line. It said also that the average family in Jordan spends JD135 per month.

The study classified those families with a maximum income of JD50 per month as living in absolute poverty.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sqour said in a statement Saturday that the Ministry of Social Development was determined to help needy families in all parts of the country.

Departments affiliated to the ministry in the governorates are involved in an aid distribution programme to the needy, started 10 days before the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The ministry's departments, will be distributing sugar, rice and clothing to 2,000 needy families in the Jordan Valley soon, Dr. Sqour said.

In addition, he said, charitable organisations operating in Jordan have allocated financial and in-kind assistance during Ramadan in implementation of a charity programme spearheaded by the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF).

Engineers protest a firing

By Odeh Odeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Hundreds of Jordanian engineers Saturday staged a sit-in at the professional Association complex in Amman in protest of the dismissal from office of a veteran employee for political reasons.

Last Thursday, hundreds of engineers held another sit-in at the association's branch in Salt also to protest the sacking of Saeed Qamomouh who had served as public relations officer at the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) and chairman of engineering committee for 14 years.

The dismissal decision was taken by the JEA board, whose members belong to the Muslim Brotherhood movement.

When the present board won the JEA elections in February 1992, under "the White Bloc" slogan, its members announced that no one at the association will lose his job for political reasons.

Board Chairman and JEA President Hosni Abn Gheida said hours after the results were announced that the White Bloc's hearts were white and that no one would ever be dismissed for his political ideas or affiliation.

The dismissal of Mr. Qamomouh took place last Thursday and it is maintained by some that scores of others are on the dismissal list.

Those to be dismissed, according to association sources, hold ideas contrary to those held by the board members.

The protestors in Salt and Amman said the dismissals were contrary to the spirit of the JEA and a dangerous precedent, which conflicts with the engineers role as defender of public freedoms.

Lower House of Parliament speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat told the Jordan Times that he had learned of the problem and plans to contact the JEA board and the JEA president to reach a solution.

Industrialists to probe German trade prospects

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 10-member business delegation representing the Jordanian Trade Association (JTA) plans a four-city tour of Germany to survey the German market for export-import and trade opportunities, according to JTA Executive Director Halim Abu Rahme.

Mr. Abu Rahme told the Jordan Times that in the week-long visit, scheduled for March, the Jordanian team will discuss joint ventures with potential firms in eastern as well as western parts of Germany and will contact importers and exporters in the German market.

According to Mr. Abu Rahme, the delegation will visit Frankfurt, Bremen, Hamburg and Berlin where they will also hold meetings with officials from the public sector.

He said the delegation will be looking for partners in the German market who are interested in importing Jordanian products, exporting German products to Jordanian markets and barter trade with the Kingdom.

The visit is in line with the JTA plans for opening new markets for Jordanian products abroad and will be similar to visits JTA members made in the past two years to Russia, Austria and Lebanon, as well as Sudan where the JTA opened a "representative office" last November, Mr. Abu Rahme said.

He added that the Sudan office deals directly with Jordanian merchants outside the framework of the Jordanian-Sudanese trade protocol.

Before the end of the year, the JTA will make similar visits to Poland and Bulgaria for trade talks.

New English School students, parents protest fee hikes

By Roufan Nahhas and Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A decision by one of Amman's leading private schools to raise tuition fees and transportation charges has drawn strong protests from parents and students as well as some of the teachers.

About 800 students of the New English School (NES) stayed away from class for two hours Saturday morning, the first working day after the school issued a circular announcing a 35 to 50 per cent increase in tuition fees for all grades, including kindergarten. School bus charges were also raised from JD180 to JD280 per year.

Over 250 parents — mostly from middle class families — converged on the school Saturday morning to protest the hikes and meet with school officials, but no decision to settle the dispute could be reached in the absence of NES Chairman of the Board, Sa'eed Al Turk, effectively the owner of the school.

A meeting between the administration and parents was scheduled for next Saturday. In the meantime, the protesting parents, meeting inside one of the halls of the school, decided not to pay the third quarter fee for this year or registration deposits for next year until the dispute is resolved.

Nigel Melen, principal of the school, addressed the parents in the packed room, saying that he was "ashamed" that the students

boycotted classes.

He called on the parents to "keep the administrative issue and education separate from each other."

But parents said they had not asked their children to stay away from class, and that it appeared that secondary school student leaders had taken the initiative themselves.

Most parents were visibly angry and upset. "We have the right to keep our children in this school," said one of the parents. "It is not easy to change schools after a student has studied at a particular school for some years."

Many of the parents agreed that NES which started with a good reputation a few years ago, continues to maintain its educational standards. But they claimed that it was now being handled as a commercial enterprise rather than an educational institution.

Her Royal Highness Princess Alia, the school's Honorary President, said she was upset with the increase in fees and transport charges and described it as a "regretful matter."

Princess Alia said she was dissatisfied with the level of coordination between the administration and parents over the past three years.

She said she was willing to mediate the dispute.

"I am willing to meet with the parents and discuss the possible ways to counteract this move," she said. "Fees should be reasonable, and the administration's

objectives should bypass the commercial ones.

According to parents, the school, with a current enrolment of about 2,000 students, increased fees by 25 per cent last year, offering expansion programmes, increasing expenses and maintenance costs as justifications for the hike.

With the increases announced last week, parents say they would have to pay almost double the amount of fees they used to pay for their children two years ago.

Fees for kindergarten students were raised from JD 575 to JD 675 per year; grades one to six, from JD 710 to JD 950; grades seven to nine, from JD 830 to JD 1,300; grade 10, from JD 940 to JD 1,450; grades 11 and 12 (Tawjihi), from JD 1,000 to JD 1,600; grade 11 (IGCSE), from JD 1,065 to JD 1,800; and grade 12 and 13 A-level, from JD 2,000 to JD 2,600.

"We are not interested in swimming pools or other facilities," said a parent who has four children at the school. "I can barely pay their fees now. How am I supposed to manage in the coming years?"

Some of the NES teachers who send their own children to the same school said they were also dismayed by the increases. They met privately to discuss the issue and decided to submit a formal request to the owner of the school seeking exemption from the increase.

Several parents claim that the successive fee increases are

directly linked to the change in the school's management. NES was co-owned by Mr. Turk and a Kuwaiti national until the Gulf crisis, when the Kuwaiti co-owner decided to quit and Mr. Turk, a businessman, became the sole owner.

The government is unable to intervene in the dispute at the NES in the absence of any legislation which gives it authority in the financial aspects of private schools.

"The government can only intervene in particular matters such as textbooks, vacations and licensing of private schools according to the law," said Dr. Munther Al Masri, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education.

"It cannot intervene in private schools' administration or teachers' salaries, students' fees or extra expenses," he told the Jordan Times.

He said the ministry had taken note of Saturday's protest action at the NES, but it could do nothing beyond that. At the same time, he said, such actions might eventually lead the authorities to have a new look at private schools in the Kingdom.

"If the parents submitted a formal demand for the government to intervene, we would try our best to make a compromise between both sides," Dr. Al Masri said.

"At this point in time, however, we don't have any authority to impose any law on them."

Anti-smoking group battles French radio ads

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A campaign launched by Jordan's Anti-Smoking Society against Radio Monte Carlo advertisements of cigarettes appears to be getting nowhere, with the Minister of Information pleading helplessness to address the complaint against the French station whose Arabic-language transmissions are widely heard in the Arab World.

The issue stems from what the society sees as a clear infringement of an international code of conduct for broadcasting companies against promoting cigarettes.

"It is high time the authorities moved to prevent Radio Monte Carlo broadcasting advertisements of cigarettes and offering incentives and bonuses to smokers," said Zuhair Malhas, president of the Anti-Smoking Society.

Dr. Malhas, a former Minister of Health, noted that very few

radio and television stations around the world carry advertisements of cigarettes as national and international acknowledgements of the dangers inherent in smoking.

Many countries have adopted legislation against radio and television promotions for cigarettes, and even in those countries which do not have such laws the broadcasting authorities exercise discretion, Dr. Malhas said.

"In Japan, television and radio stations carry cigarette advertisements only after 10 p.m.," he noted.

In the case of Radio Monte Carlo, the Arabic-language advertisements also represent a "clear discrimination," Dr. Malhas said.

"There are no such advertisements in the French-language transmission of Radio Monte Carlo since they are not permitted," he said. "Isn't it a double standard that the French see cigarette advertisements as not good for the French public but

are good enough for the Arabs?"

Dr. Malhas said he had written to the Minister of Information appealing for intervention with the director of Radio Monte Carlo, Jacques Taquet, who visited Jordan last year. But the minister, Mahmoud Al Sharif, said he was unaware of any such approach.

In any event, Mr. Sharif said, "What authority do I have on a French radio station operating out of French territory?"

Dr. Malhas agreed, but asserted that "we have the moral authority to appeal and seek an end to a practice which is clearly discriminatory."

The former health minister said he had sent an appeal to Mr. Sharif during the visit of Mr. Taquet, who was received by the minister.

"I was appealing only on moral grounds," he said. "The director of the radio was here in Jordan and we could have had informed him of our concerns."

He said, "The minister could still write (Mr. Taquet) informing him of the appeal."

Randa Habib, Radio Monte Carlo correspondent in Jordan, said she had received a copy of the appeal from the society and that it was shown to Mr. Taquet. Ms. Habib did not say how Mr. Taquet responded. But she noted that "advertisements in general are a major part of the radio's revenues."

According to Ms. Habib, tobacco advertisements have relatively gone down on Radio Monte Carlo. "They now represent only a small part of the radio's income," she said.

The French government has a controlling interest in Radio Monte Carlo through a state-owned agency which in turn owns majority shares of the broadcasting company.

The French embassy in Amman, however, argues that the Paris government does not exercise authority over the radio station, Dr. Malhas said.

In essence, the Arabic language advertisements of cigarettes carried by the French station are part of a bigger pattern of Western behaviour vis-à-vis the Arab World.

No advertisements for tobacco products appear in the European and American editions of most newspapers and magazines, while Middle Eastern editions do carry them.

Arab apathy is part of the continuing phenomenon, Dr. Malhas said.

Dr. Malhas said that during his tenure as health minister of Jordan in the mid- and late 1980s he had presented the Radio Monte Carlo case to the Council of Arab Health Ministers with a recommendation that Arab governments and officials adopt a no-cooperation approach towards the radio until the issue was resolved.

"Obviously they (other members of the council) had their own approaches and reasons, and nothing was done," he said.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

THE CENTRAL BANK OF JORDAN

RE: New coins in circulation

As of the 1st of March 1993, the Central Bank of Jordan will put into circulation new coins of the denominations (10 piastres), (5 piastres) and (2½ piastres), in conformity with the law of the Central Bank of Jordan and the Bylaw of the Issuance of Jordanian Currency No. (28) year 1992.

The new coins will circulate alongside the existing coins and both shall simultaneously remain in circulation as legal tender.

SPECIFICATIONS:-

Denomination	Alloy	Diameter	Thickness	Weight	Shape	Edge
10 Piastres	(Nickel Bonded Steel)	28 mm	1.5 mm	7 gm	Round	Serrated
5 Piastres	(Nickel Bonded Steel)	26 mm	1.3 mm	5 gm	Round	Serrated
2.5 Piastres	(Nickel Bonded Steel)	22 mm	1.1 mm	3 gm	Round	Serrated

The obverse of the new coins bear a new Effigy of His Majesty King Hussein encircled by the two phrases "Hussein Bin Talal", "The King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan", in Arabic.

The reverse incorporates the phrase "The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan" in English, the date of issue, the denomination in writing and figure in Arabic and in writing only in English.

Jordan Times

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Sunday's Economic Pulse

Salaries: Up in Jordan, down in America!

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

WHEN THE newly elected U.S. President Bill Clinton presented his economic adjustment package to the Congress on Feb. 17, he made it clear it was high time for America to face the crisis and halt economic deterioration, despite the sacrifices that such adjustment may entail in terms of his personal popularity, or in cost to his fellow Americans' own pockets.

It was evident that Mr. Clinton's comprehensive programme aimed, among other things, at creating new jobs, while at the same time containing salaries and wages in government and its public sector. The first priority was given to generating jobs to accommodate the unemployed, not to increase the salaries of those who work.

President Clinton undertook to freeze the salaries of government staff for a full year, after which annual increments will be allowed, provided they are lower than the prevailing inflation rate. In other words, the president will decrease salaries in real terms in order to narrow the deficit in the federal budget and save resources for investment in generating jobs and improving productivity.

President Clinton, a Democrat who came to power through general elections, must be keen about his personal popularity and his approval rating, but he showed himself to be more keen about being — and remaining — a credible and responsible president.

He may anger a certain group of his people, but he will definitely earn the respect of all of them, including government employees, who are free to seek jobs outside the government if they think that they are worth more.

By contrast, some of our elected deputies in Parliament called for an immediate salary increase for civilian and military personnel. They did not care about the huge deficit in the budget. They ignored the fact that a substantial part of the budget is covered by what some of them call usury loans and conditional foreign aid. And they accepted financing the demanded increments in salaries by begging money from foreign sources, as long as the action may improve their images among the electorate and raise their chances of being re-elected.

Not only that, but the government, in its turn, submitted to pressure so that no one can claim the deputies are more generous than the ministers. The government will grant the raise but in a retroactive fashion, in order to improve its own image like everybody else, as long as the extra cost will be paid at the expense of public funds, which belong to nobody, and at the expense of the present and future of the national economy. All this despite the fact that only two months ago the government committed itself in writing to contain the payroll as part of the economic adjustment programme.

In America, the wealthiest country in the world, austerity measures were taken to adjust and reform the economy, and rid it of the current imbalances and decline. Officials there took a bold step and stood ready to defend it bravely and responsibly. In Jordan, the poor and debt-ridden country, which covers the deficit of its budget from foreign loans and donations, irresponsible voices were very loud, and they found a government that gave in.

No one in his right mind may deny the fact that the salaries of government employees and the pensions of retirees are rather low, especially in the cases where they are the only source of income for the family. But I can name tens of thousands who left the civil and military service without a pension, and tens of thousands of applicants who are willing to take jobs in the government at the present level of salaries or even at less if they were given the chance. The Civil Service Bureau rejected them, however, due to lack of openings, despite the fact that their income is zero.

I wonder why our deputies and ministers care about improving the income of a certain group of citizens who were lucky enough to have government jobs or monthly pensions, while they don't care for citizens, seeking jobs for any salary.

Where is the sense of priority?

Free up the economy to gain self-reliance

THERE IS no doubt that crime in Jordan is rising. And there should be no denial that the increase in crime, especially theft, is directly related to unemployment and poverty. Therefore, the directives issued by the prime minister Saturday to conduct a study on poverty and absolute poverty are both appropriate and timely.

However, we cannot but note that two studies on the issue have been conducted in the past three years: One by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the other by the Ministry of Social Development. We are hopeful that the new committee formed to study the issue of poverty would fall back on those two studies and present its findings in one month as demanded by the prime minister.

Still, one cannot fail to conclude, as many economists and sociologists have, that poverty is not only directly related to unemployment, but also to the low level of investment resulting from the drying up of Arab aid that nourished the economy in the 1970s. It had been hoped that the authorities responsible for planning economic activity in the country would have adopted bolder policies in freeing the economy from state control, regulation and intervention.

Three facts must be stated here. First, past economic management, mostly based on government spending, bungled the economy, turned it into a semi-socialist one and plunged the country into deep indebtedness. Second, the present financial and economic administration has performed a magnificent feat by averting an economic disaster through sound monetary policies. And third, the IMF adjustment programme has so far been applied in a manner that is effective and humane.

Yet, for economic activity to pick up, the state needs to, one, disengage as soon as possible from economic activity and, two, liberalise laws and regulations pertaining thereto. It is, of course, fully justified to move with utmost caution on those two fronts. A complete turn from socialist-oriented policies to a liberalised, free market economy would cause a great deal of hardship and even chaos. However, a continuation of the old trend, like the opening of new branches for the consumer societies, will only aggravate the problem and prolong the quest for a solution.

Concepts like decentralisation, community activation and people's involvement that are cornerstones in the development of a democratic society cannot be fulfilled if the government continues to be the provider of all services from the provision of water and electricity to the guarantee of jobs and cheap food.

If Jordan in the new era is to be self-reliant, it follows that Jordanians themselves should be self-reliant. Yet people cannot be self-dependent if the state insists on controlling people's activity. Sure enough, if the country could liberalise its politics it should not be difficult to liberalise its economy.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

DURING his stay in the occupied territories and in his talks with the Israeli leaders, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher avoided any mention of Security Council Resolution 799, let alone the possibility of forcing Israel to abide by it, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. The paper said that in his press conference with the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Christopher said that the Israeli government was taking measures that are in its own interest, serving its own policies. With this statement, said the paper, the U.S. secretary of state is openly and frankly declaring that the expulsion of the 416 Palestinians from their homeland was in the interest of the Jewish state, and that nothing can be done by the United Nations to harm that interest. During his talks with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Christopher also avoided any mention of Resolution 799, and the meeting was totally dedicated to discussing when to resume the peace process, the paper said. None of the two ministers dared mention the fact that the Israeli decision of expelling the Palestinians stood as a major obstacle in the path of resuming the peace process, the paper added. It is true that the Arab parties yearn for peace and for serious negotiations with the Israelis to achieve that goal, but it seems that the United States is determined to encourage the Israelis not to reach a genuine peace with the Arabs, continuing to provide cover for their atrocities and protecting them against sanctions by the world community, the paper continued.

Al Dastour daily said that though the resumption of the peace process constitutes a positive step on the way of achieving peace in the Middle East, the call issued by Moscow and Washington for the Arabs to go to the negotiating table was like placing the car before the horse. This is simply because no peace can be achieved without the implementation of U.N. Resolution 799 to end the plight of the Palestinian expellees, the paper said. The call for the resumption of negotiations, the paper said, was a form of pressure on the Palestinians and the Israelis to get out of this complicated problem between now and the April, the date for resuming the peace process. It said that Washington's four-point plan to resolve the expellee question has been rejected by Israel, probably because the plan could have been interpreted by the Israeli leaders as an active part by Washington, paving the ground for playing the role of partner in the peace process, Israel's rejection of the plan was an embodiment of the Israeli policies which are oriented against peace and a refusal of the American proposal to play the role of partner in the peace process, the paper said. We believe that Washington's pressure on the Palestinians without exercising any pressure on the Israelis is bound to weaken the American position, said the paper.

A gloomy Britain

By Robert Woodward
Reuters

LONDON — Weary Britons are in despair about the state of their nation. They are disenchanted with the pillars of a society that their parents told them made Britain great. Hope about the future is at a low ebb.

Half the population would like to emigrate, an opinion poll showed last week. Four out of 10 people questioned could not think of one thing in Britain that made them proud.

"A mental state of pessimistic fatalism has the country in its grip," the Daily Telegraph said in an editorial. "The sense of national despondency is not purely of human experience."

The murder of two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool after he was led away from a shopping centre by two other boys seemed to mark a low point in the nation's fortunes.

Ten years ago Britain was preening itself after defeating Argentina in a war over the disputed Falkland Islands, reviving the World War II spirit.

Britain knew its place in the world and then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was a leader to be feared and listened to.

Listen to conversations on the bus or in the pub now and you will hear that crime is out of control, the government out of touch with ordinary people, the monarchy is a joke that is no longer funny and things can only get worse.

The malaise is rooted in fears about the recession, the longest for 60 years and seemingly never-ending. Three million people — 10.6 per cent of the work force — are out of work. A poll showed half those questioned believed their families would be affected by unemployment.

Falling house prices mean more than one million families have mortgages worth more than their homes. The growing numbers of young people sleeping rough and begging in British cities show how deep poverty has bitten.

Gloom about the recession, made worse because the downturn came so soon after the boom of the late 1980s, had made Britons save for a rainy day rather than spend. But the government is relying on consumer spending to bring a recovery.

Hand in hand with depression about the economy is a widespread belief that the government, and the 651 members of parliament, have no idea what life is in the real world is like.

Only 30 per cent of people questioned in a Gallup poll last

week believed Britain was a well-governed country, while confidence in parliament has halved in the past 10 years.

"Our democracy remains stuck in the past, unable to reflect the real concerns of people just at the point when the gap between government and governed is becoming dangerously wide," said Paddy Ashdown, leader of the opposition Liberal Democrats.

Fourteen years of uninterrupted Conservative rule has increased cynicism about the democratic process. Britons believe ministers have forgotten how to resign after committing errors and treat power as their right rather than the nation's gift.

Mrs. Thatcher's policies cut the powers of many counterweights to central government — such as trade unions and local authorities — and increased Britons' feelings of powerlessness.

"The exercise of central power has become increasingly negative and defensive," says Anthony Sampson, author of "The Anatomy of Britain," a respected analysis of British society.

The ordinary Briton fought back last October when outrage forced the government to review its plan to close 31 coal mines.

The tabloid press, for years strong supporters of the Conservative party, is now voicing the country's exasperation and the media view, the government's hints of stricter control as the last throw of an establishment under siege.

In the words of Queen Elizabeth, last year was an "Annus horribilis," for the institutions that make up the establishment.

The monarchy was cheapened by the marital problems of the heir to the throne and his younger brother. The question has been raised inside and outside parliament whether Britain needs to alter the constitutional position of the sovereign and head of state.

The legal system and police were wooed by a series of overturned verdicts and mistakes which showed English justice was often flawed.

Prime Minister John Major wants to achieve a "classless society" and a "nation at ease with itself." But he appears unwilling to accelerate the shake-up of the status quo.

"Change is itself destabilising. It brings its own risks," he said this month. "Sometimes it seems that by removing just one brick, we may risk bringing the whole house down."

Mr. Major believes many of the country's problems are psychological. The bad news has worn people down, the bulldog spirit is rare and people no longer look on the bright side.

By David Hoffman

WHEN he took office last year, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin appealed to Israelis to abandon the garrison outlook that had shaped much of their 44-year history.

"We must overcome the sense of isolation that has held us in its thrall for almost half a century," he said. "No longer is it true that the whole world is against us."

In gestures to the United States, Europe, and the Arab World, Mr. Rabin tried to show he was lifting the "siege mentality" that had been an enduring feature in the rhetoric, politics and world view of his Likud predecessors, Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir.

But in recent weeks, Mr. Rabin himself has been sounding ever louder the klaxon of the siege. He has declared that Israel is threatened from within by the "murderous terrorist organisation" Hamas, and from without by what he sees as the relentless march of Islamic extremism in the Middle East. He has lashed out at the United Nations and Europe, and demanded that the United States protect Israel from its adversaries.

In the face of a storm of international criticism, Mr. Rabin has staunchly defended the forced deportation of suspected Islamic fundamentalists, and threatened

to do it again if necessary.

What happened? The tumultuous events of recent weeks have revived in Israel a long, agonising debate about its future, spanning both of the views Mr. Rabin has offered. In countless ways, Israel is reaching out to once-forbidden parts of the globe, integrating itself into a rapidly changing international order and enjoying the fruits of long-sought "normal" existence. But at the same time, it seems to be haunted by fears of its own vulnerability — imagined and real — and still caught up in a fortress outlook.

"The history of Israel is one in which they have always been torn by a profound sense of invincibility and a pervasive sense of vulnerability," said historian Michael Oren, director of the American Jewish Committee office in Jerusalem.

He recalled how Moshe Dayan, visiting the Pentagon in the 1950s, declared that Israel faced annihilation from its neighbours, yet had an army so strong it could be in Damascus in a week. "It's more than just a siege mentality — both views have a foot in reality," Mr. Oren said.

The expulsion dispute has opened a window on this complex



Will Clinton's agenda be driven by foreign crisis?

By George Gedda
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Bill Clinton's schedule is crowded by foreign policy issues these days, and this may be just the beginning, particularly if events in Bosnia and Russia take turns for the worse.

Mr. Clinton set aside domestic concerns and spent much of the past week receiving foreign leaders and reviewing the situation in Bosnia. He will soon receive a report from Secretary of State Warren Christopher on his mission to the Middle East.

Also on Mr. Clinton's agenda are preparations for the upcoming summit with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who is locked in a high-stakes power struggle with the communist dominated parliament.

So sensitive is the question of Mr. Yeltsin's ability to survive that the State Department moved quickly last week to replace an official who speculated publicly that he probably will be ousted.

Judging by comments of top officials from previous administrations, the situation in the for-

mer Yugoslavia will get worse before it gets better. All are doubtful that Mr. Clinton's appointment of a special envoy for Bosnia, Reginald Bartholomew, will make much difference.

Former secretary of state Henry A. Kissinger says that "if a Bosnian settlement is to be just, it will have to be imposed." And, he points out, "imposition is exactly what Christopher has explicitly rejected."

Mr. Kissinger says it is an "illusion" for Mr. Christopher to believe that the negotiations recently joined by Mr. Bartholomew can lead to a settlement, embraced by all parties.

But he warns that use of force in Bosnia could make that country a "quagmire" comparable to Vietnam.

Former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, dropping all pretense of diplomatic decorum, says Mr. Christopher's legalistic training makes him ill-suited for stopping Serb aggression in Bosnia.

"I don't think the boardrooms of distinguished legal firms are

the best preparatory setting for dealing with global thugs," says Mr. Brzezinski, a Carter administration colleague of Mr. Christopher's.

Says former secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger: "I don't know of any way to stop (the war) except with the massive use of force."

If Western pressures fail to induce the Serbs to surrender their territorial gains, most analysts predict they will open a new front in Kosovo, a move that would raise the specter of a much wider Balkan war involving Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Greece and Bulgaria.

"Good-bye new world order, hello third Balkan war," says British-based columnist Gwynne Dyer. "Peace in Bosnia now means war all over the Balkans not much later."

If this scenario plays out, Mr. Clinton would be faced inevitably with the question of whether the United States should stay out or get involved.

As for the Russians, it seems apparent that Moscow and Washington set their summit for

April 4 to give Mr. Yeltsin a boost if he decides to go ahead with a nationwide referendum on April 11 on who should hold supreme power in Russia: the president or the Communist-led parliament.

This is no small matter. A Yeltsin-led Russia could be counted on to continue democratic reforms and to cooperate with the West.

If he loses, many fear Russia would revert to past practices, seeking to reinstate the since dismantled Soviet empire and treating the West as an adversary all over again.

The sense of unease about the situation there is palpable. When the aid coordinator for the former Soviet Union, Richard Armitage, suggested recently that Mr. Yeltsin's days are "somewhat numbered" and that he is "at the end of his usefulness," he was replaced within 48 hours.

Mr. Armitage didn't follow the party line. It was Mr. Clinton who set the record straight: "I think it is a grave error to assume that he cannot continue and do well. I believe he can."

Industrialist Eitan Israeli, who recently spent two weeks in Central Asia, told the Jerusalem Post on his return that the new factor in Israel's acceptance is not ideology but profit. "I am not going to Central Asia for Zionist principles. I am going there to make money," he said.

Israel has diplomatic relations today with more nations than ever before. Last year, barriers fell with China, India, Nigeria and 20 other states. "Our diplomatic globe is starting to correspond to the geographic globe," said Eviatar Manor, a Foreign Ministry spokesman.

The Arab boycott remains a powerful reminder to Israelis of their isolation, but there are signs it is weakening. Japan recently condemned the boycott, to which some Japanese companies had long bowed, opening prospects for new business investment from there.

"In the last couple of years, people have come to appreciate the fruits of the world opening toward Israel," former government spokesman Yossi Omer said. "You can go to Cuba, China or India on an Israeli visa. The sense that people have in Israel is that in this new world of open borders, open movement, it is not as salient to say Israel is still a fortress by itself." — The Guardian Weekly.

Rabin's siege mentality

inner psychology, and perhaps ultimately will shape the outcome of peace talks with the Palestinians and Arab states. According to many analysts, if Israelis feel the siege is lifting, they may be more willing to make the concessions needed for a settlement. But when feeling cornered or besieged, as just before the expulsions, Israel has often reacted harshly — and plunged deeper into the garrison outlook.

These two moods are often intertwined. Mr. Rabin has made one of his principal goals a future peace agreement: the ultimate lifting of the siege. Yet in the aftermath of a string of attacks on Israeli soldiers, he also decided to do something drastic, to show Israeli Jews his empathy for their fears and their anger. Even if the deportations created a messy problem for Israel abroad, Mr. Rabin struck a powerful chord at home.

The threats to its existence have all but abated Israel is the only nuclear power in the Middle East and one of the strongest conventional military powers, backed by the only remaining superpower. For the first time since the birth of the state, it is engaged in direct, if lagging,

peace negotiations with its Arab neighbours and Palestinians.

Yet Israel's public mood often seems suspended between self-confidence and foreboding. Even when the fortress gate seems to be lifting, there are insistent voices demanding that it be closed again.

Recently, for example, after months of delays, the parliament repealed a law passed in the mid-1980s that made talking to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) a crime.

The vote was the latest sign of a changed approach to the PLO, long considered by the government to be Israel's leading nemesis. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat then gave an interview to Israel's largest mass circulation daily, Yedioth Aharonoth, and a telephone interview to state-run Israeli television. A leftist legislator, the Labour Party's Yael Dayan, daughter of Moshe Dayan, went to Tunis last week to meet Mr. Arafat, the first member of parliament to do so after the ban was lifted. She was pictured on the front page of newspapers in Israel with Mr. Arafat's arm around her.

But on her return, she was

enveloped in controversy. Mr. Rabin called her visit "a shame to us all and a disgrace to the Labour Party." Dozens of other legislators denounced her.

Veteran pollster Haanoch Smith said Israelis "remain distrustful of the world around them. When I ask periodically if they could, would the Arabs drive Israel into the sea? almost 70 per cent are saying yes. That's what I call a people with a siege mentality."

Meanwhile, almost every day brings new evidence that Israel is shedding its history of isolation.

The crumbling of the Soviet empire not only unleashed a new exodus of immigrants, but also opened fertile new territory for Israeli business and agricultural expertise in the once-closed republics of Central Asia and Europe. Israel has become a leading source of irrigation technology in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kirgizstan.

Recently, Askar Akayev, Kirgizstan's reformist president, visited Israel and signed farming agreements, then announced his country would open an embassy in Israel.

سنة ١٤١٤ هـ

By Clare Pedrick

Mysterious end of a mafia tyrant



Salvatore Riina

ME — When carabinieri caught up with supreme overlord Salvatore "Totò" Riina on Jan. 15, few people were expecting the man once described as the devil incarnate to look the way he did. Police only had a photograph more than two decades out of date to help them in their search for the "boss of bosses" who had been on the run for 23 years. They had been told by former mafia mobsters that Riina had probably had his surgery.

to the public mind, Mr. Riina became a legend, both for ruthless cruelty with which he posed of his enemies and the quiet Pininfarina-like ease with which he thumbed his nose at the army forces who tried to trace him.

Yet the truth was to prove anger than any of the rumours. A carabinieri (police) special operations unit eventually tracked him, Italy's most wanted man, being driven in an elderly Citroen saloon along a lermo high street. Mr. Riina had no guards to protect him and was unarmed. And the man who had been on the run for 23 years, the leader of an international criminal organisation, whose annual turnover is estimated to be in the region of 20,000 billion lire (\$13.5 billion) in Italy alone.

The photograph taken of him shortly after his arrest shows Mr. Riina to be very short — he only stands at 155 centimetres — stocky, with a pudgy face, wearing a dark jacket and a dark shirt. Police and prison officers have seen him say he is rarely literate — he left school at age of nine. He behaves in a deferential manner, standing up when spoken to, with none of the angry arrogance of other mafia bosses who have been caught in the past.

Most men who have broken the mafia code of silence to cooperate with police have told how the boss's son from the small town of Corleone fought his way to the top of the underworld organisation, liquidating anyone who crossed his path or questioned his word.

Carabinieri say they believe Riina has killed at least 40 people with his bare hands, strangled them or strangled them the preferred method since it leaves no blood and makes no noise — and dissolving their victims in acid baths.

His victims have allegedly included businessmen who outlived their usefulness, gangsters from all clans and representatives of a state — politicians, magistrates and policemen. Among the names facing Totò Riina are the assassinations last summer (May and July 1992) of anti-mafia crusader judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino.

People who have known and spoken with Mr. Riina say it was his brutality and ruthlessness that enabled him to wield such immense power. In spite of his lack of formal education, he is said to

be gifted with a highly astute brain and unimpaired by any kind of moral conscience.

Mr. Riina reportedly began his career as a murderer while still a teenager. He is said to have joined the mafia at the tender age of 13, serving his apprenticeship as an assassin for his hero and senior by five years, Luciano Liggio, boss of Corleone where both Mr. Riina and Mr. Liggio were born and raised.

In 1977, Mr. Liggio was arrested in Milan — some say thanks to information supplied by Mr. Riina — and Mr. Riina stepped into his shoes. But Mr. Riina was much more ambitious; he set about establishing a regime based on terror.

Gaspere Mutolo, who for years worked as Mr. Riina's personal driver before deciding to cooperate with police last summer, has described in his confessions how Mr. Riina dealt with rare cases of opposition. "It was a systematic strategy of elimination," said Mr. Mutolo. "Not just of those who openly opposed him, but also of anyone who simply didn't share his choices."

It was under Mr. Riina's leadership that the mafia changed its traditional strategy of keeping a low profile to declare open warfare against the Italian state. "The beast" is alleged to have ordered all the terrorist-style attacks against high profile figures over the past decade, starting with chief magistrate Rocco Chinnici, blown up by a car-bomb in 1983 and ending with Judge Borsellino, who died together with five bodyguards in a massive explosion last July.

In the end, it may have been this policy which led to Mr. Riina's downfall, say analysts. The outcry which followed the slayings of judges Falcone and Borsellino galvanised the Italian government into taking decisive action against the mafia, sending 7,000 soldiers into Sicily and introducing new legislation to increase police powers. The deaths also touched a chord with the general public, sparking a rebellion in Sicily itself where the people's silence had always

capture comes at a moment when Italy's established political parties are in a state of decline. It has long been suggested that some sectors of the political old guard in Italy acted as protectors to the mafia.

Mr. Riina's capture also opens up a leadership race. Prime candidates for his replacement are Bernardo Provenzano, allegedly Mr. Riina's killing partner from the early days in Corleone, and Leoluca Bagarella, brother of Antonietta Riina and reportedly one of her husband's ablest assassins.

Toto Riina could feasibly carry on his command from his prison cell, standard practice in mafia circles, say observers. Rules dictate that a mafia boss behind bars appoint a trusted delegate through whom to execute his orders. Still at large is a whole army of Mr. Riina's cousins, uncles and other relatives who would be ready to carry on the family business.

But the absolute power held by Mr. Riina, and the viciousness with which he wielded it, may also lead to a bloody power tussle and a wave of revenge killings from outside the Corleone gang, say mafia watchers. The result may be a new round of clan wars which could prove to be even more bloody than the struggle in the early 1980s when more than 500 Sicilian mobsters and their families died in the battle that ended with Mr. Riina's Corleone clan as victors.

A more chilling scenario is the prospect of a fresh wave of executions of public figures, by a mafia keen to prove it is down but not out. "We mustn't lull ourselves into thinking that we have wiped out their offensive capabilities," said mafia expert Pino Arlacchi. They may well try to demonstrate that they are just as strong as before. For example, they could kill a couple of public officials, as a lesson.

Earlier this month, before Mr. Riina's arrest, Italian interior ministry officials revealed they had uncovered plots to assassinate Prime Minister Giuliano Amato and Defence Minister Salvatore Ando.

So far, the man billed as Italy's most dangerous criminal has been doing his best to convince everyone that he is a clear victim of mistaken identity. "I'm not the monster you think I am," he has told magistrates who questioned him. "I'm just a poor, sick old man. How could a poor old peasant like me be the head of the mafia?"

But playing the role of the pleasant, innocuous old man is one of Mr. Riina's most skilful tricks, say those who know him. "If you see Riina and talk to him, he seems a good man. He appears kind and thoughtful," said his former henchman Pino Marchese in his confession. "But he is like an apple which is nice and red on the outside, while inside it is rotten and full of worms."

World News Link



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Save water... every drop counts!

Jordan confident solution will be found

(Continued from page 1)

merican-Russian announcement as premature. The Palestinians have said in public that their return to the West Bank is contingent on Israeli reversing the expulsions. They are willing to accept a compromise which involves a phased return of the exiles, stranded in Lebanon. But Mr. Christopher was unable to produce an agreement to such a deal. The net message that Mr. Christopher got in talks in Amman a week was that Jordan, which provides the "umbrella" for

Palestinian participation in the peace process, believes that any solution to the crisis should be acceptable to the Palestinian side, represented by the mainstream leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

His Majesty King Hussein told reporters after talks with Mr. Christopher that the consequences of a breakdown of the peace process could be disastrous to the Middle East. At the same time, the King also stressed that the expellee crisis remained a major hurdle in the process.

Small panel agrees on conference

(Continued from page 1)

Wednesday and Thursday. Fighting had also broken out in the northern city of Kisumu. "What happened over the last 72 hours won't be as far as we see have any effect on our withdrawal or the size of our initial force," Colonel Fred Clark, U.S. military spokesman, said in a daily news briefing.

In Washington, White House spokesman George Stephanopoulos also expressed optimism the U.S.-led forces would deliver peacekeeping duties to local forces, probably in mid-June.

We continue to believe that an agreement with the current table," Mr. Stephanopoulos said. "The situation has been moving, at least today."

Merimes of France, asked if the fighting will delay the transfer, also said, "I'm afraid it will." In his first public speech since Monday's violence, Gen. Morgan backed the actions of his militia in Kisumu, saying they acted in self-defence. But he said he wanted to cooperate with the multi-national task force to end bloodshed in Somalia.

"We want to show the world, UNITAF (the task force) that we are not against peace. We don't need any more killings in Somalia," he said.

After his speech, he took the military commanders to an assembly point for his militia who displayed an array of weapons, including anti-tank guns, machineguns and bazookas.

The U.S. commanders were led by Brigadier-General Lawson Magruder, head of American forces in Kisumu, who expressed satisfaction with Gen. Morgan's compliance with the U.S. ultimatum.

"I am very pleased with compliance, that the elders had such an effect on the young in the militia ... to surrender their arms," he said.

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Jordan Times

Jarryd ousts injured Ivanisevic

ROTTERDAM (R) — Anders Jarryd, who knocked Boris Becker out of last month's Australian Open, claimed another prize scalp Friday when he beat injured Goran Ivanisevic in the quarter-finals of the World Indoor Tournament.

Jarryd, a wild-card entry, defeated the second-seeded Croatian 6-3, 6-4 to reach the semifinals, having dispatched eighth-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa in the first round Tuesday.

Ivanisevic, playing in his first tournament in six weeks after suffering a stress fracture in his foot, was hampered by a strained wrist tendon in his racket arm and needed treatment in the second set.

"I felt a big pain with each service and could hardly hold the racket on the volleys. According to the doctor it could be a bad injury. I will take two or three days off and start to practice slowly again," Ivanisevic said. "But Jarryd played unbelievably tennis. The balls kept coming back."

The 31-year-old Swede, who rose to fifth in the world rankings in 1985, is enjoying a new lease of life in 1993, having defeated former champion Becker in the first round of the Australian Open.

Becker was seeded No. 1 for Rotterdam but withdrew from the tournament because of a stomach virus.

Jarryd's semifinal opponent is fifth-seeded Alexander Volkov of

Russia, who swept aside Croatian Goran Prpic 6-2, 6-2 in the quarter-finals.

Seventh seed Karel Novacek of the Czech Republic and unseeded Italian Diego Nargiso contest the other semifinal.

Novacek beat Denmark's Kenneth Carlsen 6-4, 6-4, while Nargiso beat compatriot and doubles partner Omar Camporese 7-6, 7-6.

Agassi breezes past Sanchez

Andre Agassi used punishing ground strokes to roll over Spain's Emilio Sanchez 6-1, 6-1 Friday to advance to the semifinals of the \$300,000 Scottsdale Tennis Championship.

Third-seed Maliva Washington of the United States, had two chances to win his match against Mark Woodforde, but squandered both of them and lost to the Australian 4-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3.

Fifth-seed Brad Gilbert was ambushed by South Africa's Marcos Ondruska, 7-5, 6-2.

Earlier, eighth-seed Andre Chesnokov of Russia defeated American Derrick Rostagno, 6-2, 7-6 (7-5), setting up a semifinal contest with the 20-year-old Ondruska.

The second seeded Agassi, has not lost a set in three matches, and looked sharp from beginning to end against the Spaniard.

"I played good. As well as I needed to," Agassi said. "I never



Goran Ivanisevic

let him into the match. I did everything I needed to do and did it well."

Washington, 23, had a one-set lead and was serving at 5-4, 40-15.

He wasted the first match point with a double-fault, but appeared to end the match when Woodforde's forehand service return

was long.

However, chair umpire Rudi Berger overruled, claiming the ball was a let cord and should be replayed.

Woodforde, 27, went on to hit a forehand winner and eventually win the game and tiebreaker to even the match.

PSG eye Real, miss chance to go top

PARIS (R) — Paris St. Germain rested several of their best players before next week's UEFA Cup match with Real Madrid and missed the chance to go top of the French First Division Friday.

Portuguese trainer Artur Jorge decided to leave out Liberian striker George Weah, Brazilian midfielder Valdo and French internationals David Ginola and Laurent Fournier but paid the price with a 2-1 defeat in Metz.

A victory would have put PSG top on goal difference over Monaco and Marseille, both on 37 points after Monaco's 1-0 win over the French champions Thursday.

But two penalties by Czech midfielder Lubos Kubik in the 16th and 77th minutes sank a Parisian side with their collective mind Tuesday's quarter-final first leg match in Madrid.

Brazilian defender Ricardo, who had a goal disallowed in the 59th minute when he leaned on a Metz defender as he headed home a corner, scored a consolation goal three minutes from time.

Paris St. Germain remain two points adrift on 35 and were

joined by promoted Bordeaux, who produced a superb second half performance to beat Nantes 3-0.

Brazilian striker Ceslo Valdeir showed the way in the 50th minute. Jean-Luc Dogon made it two in the 62nd before Christophe Vecchioni wrapped things up a minute from the final whistle.

The young Nantes side fell to fifth but stay in the title race on 34 points.

Auxerre had a welcome return to form before Wednesday's UEFA Cup game with Ajax Amsterdam, beating Montpellier 2-0 for their first win of the year and ending a run of five defeats in a row. Striker Lilian Laslandes scored both goals.

St. Etienne had their first win over Lyon in four years in the central derby thanks to a 2-0 away victory with second half goals from Gerald Passi and Sylvain Kastendeuch.

Nimes and Toulon edged closer to relegation with home defeats by four-goal margins. Nimes losing 6-2 to Strasbourg and Toulon 4-0 to Sochaux.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Algeria wins Group A African Zone

TIEMCEN, Algeria (AP) — Algeria beat Ghana, 2-1, to win the Group A African qualification round Friday. Algeria now has a record of two wins a loss and a draw for five points in the group. Ghana is now 2-0-2 for four points. Durundi is 1-1-2 for three points. Algeria needed to win Friday to advance to the next round of play in the African Zone. The eventual qualifiers from Africa will play in the United States in the final round in 1994.

Voeller and Boli doubtful for Cup match

MARSEILLE (R) — German striker Rudi Voeller and defender Basile Boli are doubtful for French champions Marseille's European Cup match against CSKA Moscow after injuries in Thursday's league game with Monaco. Marseille President Bernard Tapie said Voeller was being examined Friday for suspected broken ribs and Boli was having treatment on a knee injury. The injuries were a double blow for Marseille after their 1-0 defeat by Monaco which topped them from the top of the French table. Monaco went top on goal difference.

Fernandez survives bout against Davenport

INDIAN WELLS, California (AP) — Top seed Mary Joe Fernandez survived a scare from 16-year-old Lindsay Davenport to post a 7-5, 6-2 quarterfinal victory Friday at the Evert Cup. Fernandez faces No. 5 Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic in a semifinal. Sukova defeated No. 3 Magdalena Maleva of Bulgaria 6-1, 7-5 in a match delayed 64 minutes by rain. Their rivalry is tied 5-5, with Sukova winning a three set match at the Canadian open last year. The other semifinal pits No. 4 Amanda Coetzer of South Africa against Stephanie Rottier of the Netherlands.

FIDE threatens legal action over chess championship

LONDON (R) — The International Chess Federation FIDE threatened to take legal action after world champion Garry Kasparov and challenger Nigel Short refused to play their 1993 title match under its jurisdiction. "Fide has the legal title to the world championship and will take all necessary legal steps to protect those rights," the federation said in a statement released from its headquarters in Lucerne, Switzerland. Kasparov and Short, in a statement attacking FIDE, said earlier Friday that they were setting up a new professional chess body and invited fresh bids to stage the final.

Phoenix selected to host 1995 All Star game

PHOENIX (AP) — A major professional sporting event was awarded to Arizona for the first time since voters approved a Martin Luther King holiday when the NBA said Friday it would play its 1995 All-Star game in Phoenix. The 1993 Super Bowl had been scheduled for the Phoenix suburb of Tempe, but the NFL decided in 1991 to move that Super Bowl to Pasadena, California, after voters rejected a proposal to create a holiday to honor the slain black civil rights leader.

GOVERN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
© 1992 United States Service, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K52 ♣J62 ♠A9743 ♠74
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 2 ♣ 3 ♣ 4 ♣

What action do you take?
A.—With eight points in high cards you must certainly take some action, and the only sensible course is to bid one no trump. Note that action confirms a diamond stopper, not necessarily anything in hearts. Since partner's takeout double presumably promised something in hearts, you can afford to bid no trump with that suit unguarded.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A10 ♠Q753 ♠AQ6 ♠A108
Your right-hand opponent opens three spades. What action do you take?
A.—An ugly hand. Four hearts is out—the quality of the suit leaves a great deal to be desired. The trouble with a takeout double is what do you do if partner responds with four of a minor? Best of the lot is to bid three no trump, although that is an underbid and might founder when game in a suit is on.

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A97 ♠AK654 ♠Q ♠A872
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
2 ♣ 3 ♣ 4 ♣ 5 ♣

What action do you take?
A.—Your hand is too strong and your suit too weak for a reopening bid of three hearts, and your unbalanced distribution and lack of a source of tricks bodes ill for a no-

trump contract. We opt for a takeout double, intending to bid hearts should partner respond in a minor.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AK2 ♠A5 ♠K96 ♠A762
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♣ 1 ♣ 1 ♣ 1 ♣

What action do you take?
A.—This one's easy. Bid one no trump. That shows a hand that was too strong for a one-no-trump opening bid, i.e., about 13 points, exactly what you have.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AJ3 ♠K9 ♠Q63 ♠A10762
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♣ 1 ♣ 1 ♣ 1 ♣

What action do you take?
A.—The previous question should tip you off to the right answer here—pass. That's the right action even if you play negative doubles. You know from your holding in the overcaller's suit that partner can't want to double one spade for penalties, so all signs point to North having a near bust.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠1085 ♠AK4 ♠J785 ♠J106
Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?
A.—We see no point to bidding one diamond—you are only making a problem for yourself on the second round. We would respond one no trump, which describes our perfectly balanced nine-count to a tee.

Soccer shoe on other foot, and it's an ugly foot

WASHINGTON (AP) — The best soccer players have nasty, hurting feet, partly because their shoes are not up to their sport, a researcher says.

Shoe company officials concede that their shoes could be made tougher, but contend soccer players want lighter shoes that give players a better feel for the ball.

Dr. Raymond Rocco Monto and colleagues took X-rays of the feet and ankles of 63 players, including members of the U.S. Olympic soccer team, at a team camp and tryout in Colorado Springs, Colorado, a year and a half ago.

They found 97 per cent had bone spurs or other problems. Even though these athletes play well, these players and others like them play in pain, said Dr. Monto, at Steadman Hawking Clinic in Vail, Colorado. His study was prepared for presentation at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons meeting in San Francisco.

The study found bone spurs or lighter deposits of calcium in the front of 60 per cent of the X-rayed ankles; they probably resulted from striking the ball.

It also found a lack of proper bone fusing in the backs of 32 per cent of his ankles, which it said may result from the deep flexing of the foot in the kicking motion. The X-rays showed calcification in the toe joints in 34 per cent.

And it found broken sesamoid bones, at the bottom of the foot, in 47 per cent. This may result

from foot pressure on a cleat or stud that shoes have below the bone, Monto said.

Although Monto's study did not look for causes, he suspects the malformed bones are an adaptation to constant playing. The study did not determine how early in a player's career the problems began, but he believes the effect accumulates over years of activity.

"The average player runs about 12 kilometers a game, and that's not counting all the training," Monto said. Even high school (ages 14-10) players run about that much, he said. This can lead to overstress injury, he said.

The impact of the ball may also create damage, Monto said.

"It's repetitive microtrauma, constantly banging and hitting and stressing the joints," he said. "The ball travels at 80 miles an hour (129 kph)."

And soccer shoes do little to protect the foot, he said.

"I'm a little dismayed that the design of the soccer shoe has lagged so far behind other athletic footwear," he said. "They're using basically the same shoe for the last 30 years."

For instance, damage to the front ankle and foot area could be controlled by putting a strip of kevlar, a plastic used in bullet-proof vests, or titanium, a metal used in modern aircraft, in the shoe as a buffer, Monto said.

Toughening the shoe's toe box could protect the toes, he said. Removing the cleat or stud

could protect the sesamoids, he said.

Shoe company officials, however, contend that it's not that simple. If they built tougher, bulkier shoes, players would not buy them, they say.

"What a soccer player looks for is a very sleek looking shoe that fits like a glove to his foot," said David Daly, European soccer marketing manager for Nike International in Beaverton, Oregon. "He gets minimal construction so he gets very good feel for the ball."

Many players get that glove-like fit by cramming their feet into too small a shoe, said J. Spencer White, director of research engineering for Reebok in Stoughton, Massachusetts.

"A size nine often ends up on a 10 or a 10 1/2 foot," White said. "Feel is crucial," said Peter R. Moore, director of Soccer Worldwide for Reebok. "Your feet are your weapon."

He has doubts about Monto's proposal to put a titanium strip in the shoe. "Any metal on the top of the shoe would be illegal, and it would detract from the feel of the ball," Moore said.

As for the cleat under the sesamoid in the forefoot, Moore considers it vital for traction, especially in wet fields.

If you're kicking with your left foot and planting your right, your right heel lifts with the kicking motion, he said.

"If you don't have that stud under your dig toe, you don't have contact with the ground," Moore said.



Visuvanathan Anand

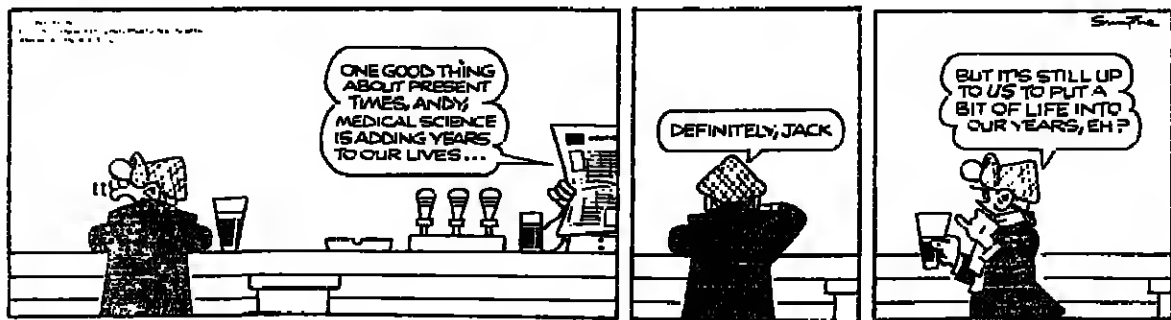
Anand beats Ivanchuk in 20 moves: Indian grandmaster Visuvanathan Anand defeated Vassily Ivanchuk of the Ukraine in 20 moves Friday to tie for the lead after the third round of the 11th Linares International Chess Tournament.

Anand and Ivanchuk are tied for the world's No. 3 ranking. Former world champion Anatoly Karpov, ranked No. 2 in the world, won his third round match 10-1 against Alexander Belyavsky of Ukraine. World champion Garry Kasparov of Russia and Artur Yusupov of Russia adjourned after 60 moves with Kasparov playing white. After three rounds, four players were atop the standings with 2.0 points: Belyavsky, Alexi Shirov, Latvia; Karpov, Russia; Anand, India. A player receives one point for a win and one half point for a draw. The 13-round tournament, dubbed the Wimbledon of chess, ends March 14.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carrol Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: If you made drastic changes in your diet last evening, the results can show up this morning. Pace yourself through the second wind that culminates with moon's entry into Gemini. Check info twice.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Partners and associates in the outside world are the best means for you to forge ahead during the daytime but tonight avoid a discontented adviser.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can make whatever tasks you have to do today filled with a new sense of color or precision and tonight don't encourage a gossiping person.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) The daytime finds you able to bring your special aptitudes to the attention of those able to make them a success but tonight avoid going out on the town.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get into whatever you can do to make your residence a heaven of rest and wellbeing but tonight don't respond to an irate family member.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make sure to listen closely to what usual associates have to suggest since therein rests some future benefit; tonight don't call on a depressing person.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Properly, possessions.

accounts and liabilities should occupy your time and attention today since your judgement in handling with ascends is good.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your charm is high and you are articulate in expressing your innermost desires so you can get the support you want; later handle personal long-term problems.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to see all phases of a campaign to put into motion your most cherished longings after which make sure you avoid a demanding playmate.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) True accord between you and friends can be reached during the daytime while tonight careful attention to family needs is important.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do whatever you feel will increase your standing in the community and enhance your good name while tonight don't let yourself get in an argument.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have the good will of a newcomer in your life who can be most helpful in aiding your progress so accept it; tonight don't go off on any tangent.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Cooperation should be the quality you use in all your relationships today so seek out those you want for future allies; tonight don't argue over a debt.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"I'm having one of those mornings. Fill up the bathtub with coffee!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NUTED

RANGL

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DOWHAS

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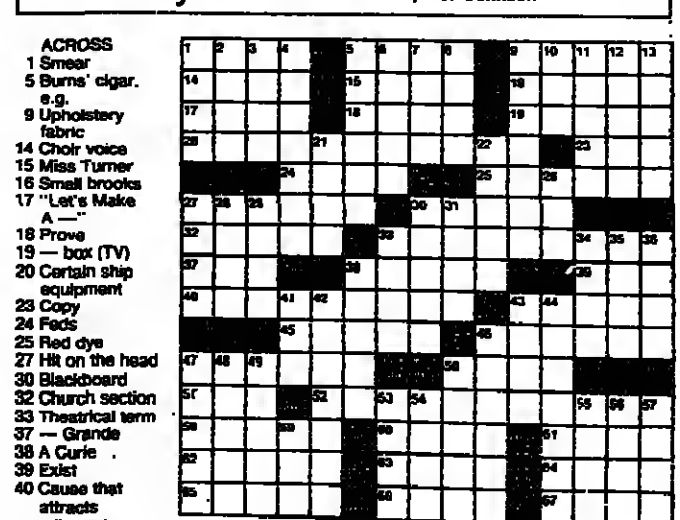
Answer here: "O O O O O O O O O O"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: GLANO POISE SCARCE OCEIT

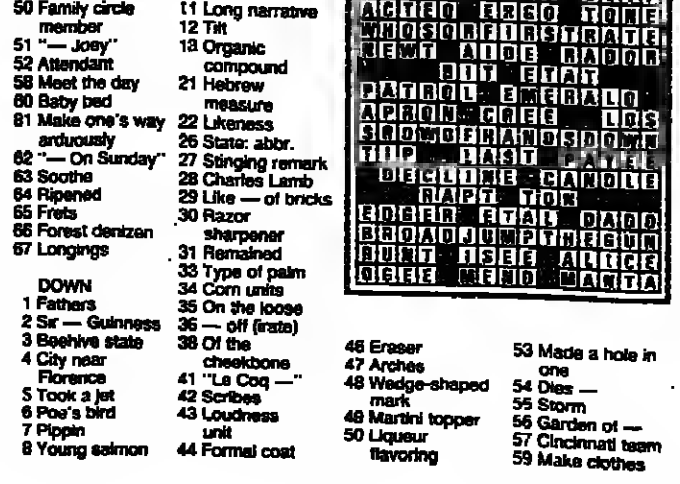
Answer: The actor's voice dubbed as this—A "PRESS" AGENT

THE Daily Crossword by Don Johnson



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



مكتبة الأمل

U.N. says Serbs obstruct aid to Bosnia's Muslim enclave

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations accused rebel Serbs Saturday of renewed obstruction of aid deliveries to Muslim trapped in a "forgotten enclave" of eastern Bosnia and said it feared another wave of ethnic cleansing was under way.

U.N. officials said 12 trucks were ready to leave Belgrade Sunday to try to get 120 tonnes of food and medical supplies to the tiny mountain enclave of Cerska for the first time.

But one official said Bosnian Serbs had insisted the trucks, which must cross Serb-held territory, should take "what seems to be a goat track through the mountains."

"That is not acceptable," said Judith Kumin, head of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Belgrade. "I think they are attempting to obstruct the arrival of the aid," she said.

A Serb blockade of a convoy trying earlier this month to reach up to 20,000 people trapped in Cerska was one of the factors which led High Commissioner Sadako Ogata briefly to suspend the agency's operations last week.

The blockade helped prompt U.S. President Bill Clinton's announcement Thursday of air-drops of supplies to tens of thousands of Bosnians cut off behind siege lines.

U.N. officials said they had also asked the Serbs to explain an incident Friday in which 1,500 Muslims, mainly elderly women

and children, has to walk at night across battle lines in central Bosnia under Serb small arms fire.

British U.N. troops, alerted to the crossing in advance, used armoured vehicles to shield the refugees. A U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman said the refugees seemed to be "designed to bury them along."

The refugees had been based to the front line at Turbe from the area of Sipovo, near the town of Banja Luka in Serb-held north Bosnia, Commander Barry Frewer said in Sarajevo.

He said the exodus seemed to be the result of ethnic cleansing — the creation by force of "ethnically pure" areas carved out mainly by Serbs in Bosnia territory.

The refugees reached Travnik, behind Bosnian government lines.

"We've asked (the Serbs) some questions and we're waiting for a response," Commander Frewer said.

Muslim-held Cerska, high in the snowbound mountains of eastern Bosnia, has been cut off from outside help since war erupted in the republic last April after majority Muslims and ethnic Croats declared independence from Yugoslavia.

"What they (the Serbs) are proposing seems to be a goat track through the mountains, which is not acceptable," Ms. Kumin told Reuters.

U.N. aid convoys cannot operate in Bosnia without the cooperation of the warring parties. Bosnian Serb authorities denied they were obstructing the

convoy or reneging on pledges of safe passage for aid convoys.

A top aide to Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said the Serbs wanted the UNHCR to unload its cargo at Zepa, far south of Cerska, and leave the Muslims to haul the aid in themselves over the mountains.

"We have proposed this route because fighting is raging around Cerska because Muslims want to establish their own corridor... it is for safety reasons," the aide, Slavisa Rakovic, told Reuters.

U.S. airmen in Frankfurt, Germany, were awaiting orders Saturday to begin Mr. Clinton's parachute drops using C-130 cargo planes.

Defence officials in Washington have said the first supplies could be dropped from Sunday though weather conditions and operational considerations could delay the maiden mission.

But Ms. Kumin said Cerska might be difficult to supply even by air, given the imprecisions of parachute drops. "It's a very small area so it's difficult to pinpoint," she said.

No independent information is available on conditions in Cerska. Ms. Kumin said many refugees from the enclave who had trekked to the Muslim stronghold of Tuzla had advanced scabies and severe lice infestation and had been "in a very bad state."

Meanwhile, police found a one-kilo (2.2 pound) bomb lying in the street opposite the U.S. embassy in the Croatian capital Zagreb Friday and defused it without incident, an embassy

spokeswoman said Saturday.

The suitcase-sized bomb, packed with dynamite, was discovered about 12 metres from the embassy entrance on a busy main street in downtown Zagreb at two p.m. (1300 GMT) Friday, spokeswoman Susan Hovanec told Reuters.

Police stopped traffic so no vehicle would drive over the explosive and a bomb squad disarmed it within an hour.

Ms. Hovanec said the embassy's 10 diplomats and 30 support staff moved to rooms facing an inner courtyard, away from street windows, as a precaution during the episode.

She said the bomb did not appear to have been deliberately planted outside the embassy but apparently fell off a passing vehicle. No claim of responsibility was reported.

"It appears it was associated with a passing car because it had four magnets on it that would have been used to attach it to the undercarriage of a car," she said.

Croatian police said the explosive was believed to have fallen from a small red Fiat car as it bumped over a rough stretch of road in the left lane most distant from the embassy entrance.

Police were searching for the driver to determine whether he knew the bomb was clamped to his car.

The bomb had a detonator which would have been set off by a radio signal. It was not big enough to have done more damage than blow out the embassy's windows, Ms. Hovanec said.



Firemen lower a woman from the World Trade Centre plaza after smoke swept through the 110-storey building following an explosion under the twin towers (AFP photo)

New York's tower blast kills 5

NEW YORK (R) — A bomb blast ripped through the parking garage of the landmark World Trade Centre Friday, killing five people, injuring as many as 700 and trapping thousands in darkness and smoke for hours.

The explosion, shortly after midday, ripped through three levels of the underground garage and started a fire that sent smoke billowing through the twin 110-storey towers of the complex.

"My first thought... was that I was trapped in something like that film *The Towering Inferno*," said Christopher King, who works in the complex.

First Deputy Mayor Norman Steisel said five people were killed in the blast. He said earlier reports by city officials of seven dead were wrong.

New York Governor Mario Cuomo, calling the blast "a tragedy of immense proportions," said it was definitely caused by a bomb.

"It was placed... on a floor in the parking areas," he said on a cable News Network (CNN) talk show.

Gov. Cuomo also said the bomb was likely an act of terror.

"No foreign people or force has ever done this to us. Until now we were invulnerable," he said.

But the investigation was hampered by concerns over the presence of hazardous asbestos, security sources said.

"There is a huge asbestos problem... which prevents people from going in," an official said.

Special hazardous disposal experts were flown in from as far away as Chicago to help deal with the cancer-causing fibers that may have been released by the blast.

Each day, an estimated 50,000 people fill the office and shopping complex on the edge of New York's financial district. The centre's twin towers are the world's second-tallest buildings.

Seven hundred people were treated for injuries, mainly smoke inhalation, from the blast. A pregnant woman was plucked from the roof by a rescue helicopter.

As smoke poured into the towers and with power cut in the entire complex, occupants were forced to snake their way down as many as 107 flights of stairs. They

emerged into the snow outside, their faces covered with soot.

A class of kindergarten children was caught on the 107th floor observatory when the blast occurred and took the whole day to walk down.

The smoke remained in the halls and stairs for hours and it took eight hours to restore power and begin to get some of the 250 elevators in the complex moving.

The blast set off a widespread security alert stretching from New York's airports to Capital Hill in Washington.

As accidental causes such as a gas leak or electrical fire were ruled out, law enforcement sources said it was increasingly likely that a terrorist bomb was involved.

A local broadcast report said the police precinct in the area received a call of responsibility from a group calling itself the Serbian Liberation Front.

Serbs and Bosnians are fighting in the former Yugoslavia. A bomb was found early Saturday in front of the U.S. embassy in Zagreb, Croatia and defused.

Croatia is one of the breakaway regions from Yugoslavia.

Fighting flares in Karabakh

MOSCOW (R) — Fighting flared Saturday between Azeris and Armenians in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh as a new round of peace talks began in Rome. Interfax News Agency said.

It quoted Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry as saying Azeri forces had regained control of the strategically important Sarsang Dam area, but Karabakh's ethnic Armenian forces said all Azeri attacks had been beaten back.

"Military activities in the north of Nagorno-Karabakh's Mardakert region picked up Friday after a brief lull and continued Saturday, according to information from the warring sides," Interfax said.

Azeri forces lost the area around the Sarsang Dam to Armenians earlier this year in a series of defeats that led to a major shake-up in the Azeri military command.

A new round of talks began in Rome Friday to explore ways of settling the five-year territorial conflict in which several thousand people have been killed.

The talks, taking place under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, aim to pave the way for a full-scale peace conference in the Belarusian capital Minsk.

A previous session of peace talks in Rome last September broke up in disarray as fighting continued unabated in the mountainous enclave, populated most-

ly by Armenians seeking to break away from Azeri jurisdiction.

Delegates from Armenia and Azerbaijan met for most of the day Friday to try to iron out differences on pre-conditions for the talks.

"The fact that these two delegations met to discuss issues without other parties is without any doubt positive," said an Italian Foreign Ministry spokesman.

Representatives of warring ethnic Armenians and Azeris, along with 11 other states, symbolically opened the talks late in the day and immediately adjourned until Saturday.

The spokesman said all parties were expected to attend Saturday, but the situation was volatile and the talks could be called off by any of the participants.

Several thousand people have been killed since 1988 in fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous region ruled by Azerbaijan but populated mainly by Armenians.

Armenians and Azeris from the territory are attending the talks as "guests of the presidency" of the Minsk group to overcome any problems over their diplomatic status.

The group's president, Mario Raffaelli, a former under-secretary at the Italian Foreign Ministry, has drawn up proposals for a ceasefire and a four-phase transition process culminating in the Minsk conference.



A 10-year-old Armenian boy loads bullets into a magazine as a soldier fires at Azeri forces in Nagorno-Karabakh (AFP photo)

Poll: Campbell most popular choice for Canadian premier

TORONTO (R) — Canada's Defence Minister Kim Campbell is the most popular of the likely contenders to replace Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, according to the first major public opinion poll published since he said he would quit.

Mr. Mulroney announced his resignation Wednesday, uncertainty has clouded his future since his government's proposals for constitutional reform were defeated in an October referendum. The proposals were aimed at solving the separatist dispute in French-speaking Quebec.

An outspoken Vancouver lawyer, Ms. Campbell is widely expected to seek the party's leadership at a convention in June. If successful, she would become Canada's first woman prime minister and lead the Conservatives into elections later this year.

The Gallup poll of 1,153 Canadians published in the Toronto Star newspaper Friday found 37 per cent of those surveyed would vote for the Conservatives in this year's election if Ms. Campbell were prime minister.

This would put the Conservatives just two per cent behind the opposition Liberals who would score 39 per cent of the vote.

Prior to the resignation of the unpopular Mulroney, Conservative support in public opinion polls was mired at about 20 per cent.

Only 31 per cent of those surveyed said they would vote Conservative if Trade Minister Michael Wilson were party chief, while 42 per cent would turn to the Liberals.

Some 26 per cent said they would vote for the Conservatives if Communications Minister Perrin Beatty were prime minister,



Kim Campbell

but another 44 per cent said they would vote Liberal.

If Environment Minister Jean Charest were leader, the Conservatives would score just 25 per cent while 47 per cent of those surveyed would vote for the Liberals.

None of the likely contenders has yet announced they will enter the race to succeed Mr. Mulroney, who has said he will step down once a new Conservative leader is selected at the party convention.

Meanwhile Canada's popular Liberals Friday turned their guns on Ms. Campbell.

Ms. Campbell came under fire from opposition leaders in parliament for a controversial multi-billion-dollar defence contract to buy British-built military helicopters.

Liberal leader Jean Chretien attacked Ms. Campbell for plans to spend \$4.6 billion, or \$1.1 billion more than initially budgeted, on the purchase of 50 EH-101 military helicopters built by the British company Westland.

Angola peace talks founder as UNITA stays away

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Talks to stop the bloodshed in Angola appeared to have collapsed Saturday when UNITA rebels said a government attack prevented them from sending negotiators.

"The deliberate intensification of aerial bombardment is to frustrate UNITA's attendance at the peace talks in Addis Ababa and to make UNITA responsible for the failure of the peace talks," two UNITA delegates who reached the Ethiopian capital said in a statement.

They accused the government of stepping up the bombing of their former headquarters of Huambo, 800 kilometres south of the capital, Luanda, in a deliberate attempt to torpedo a second round of peace talks under U.N. auspices in Addis Ababa.

The talks were supposed to have been held after UNITA rejected the results of internationally supervised polls which re-elected President Eduardo Dos Santos.

Angolan government delegates who arrived in Ethiopia Friday declined to comment publicly pending U.N. efforts to organise transport for the UNITA delegation from Angola and rescue the talks from breakdown.

But privately they scoffed at the idea that the UNITA team was even in Huambo.

UNITA refused to sign a peace treaty formally ending hostilities until Moscow recognises its sovereignty over the islands, which lie off Japan's main northern island of Hokkaido.

Mr. Kohl said that he understood Tokyo's position over the islands and added that Germany, which invaded Russia in World War II, had a special responsibility in helping Moscow achieve its transition to a market-based, democratic society.

"But there will be negative consequences for us all if the reforms of (Russian President Boris) Yeltsin fail," Mr. Kohl said.

Asked about inviting Mr. Yeltsin to a summit of the group of seven industrialised nations (G7) in Tokyo slated for July, Mr. Kohl said that it was a matter to be decided after consultations among all member countries.

Mr. Yeltsin attended last year's G7 summit in Munich, Germany, the G7 comprises the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Japan.

Mr. Kohl, whose visit to Japan was the fourth leg of a five-nation Asia tour, had talks with Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa earlier

Kohl urges Japan to boost aid to CIS

TOKYO (R) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, on a four-day visit to Japan, said Saturday that Bonn had shouldered too much of the aid burden for the former Soviet Union and urged Tokyo to make a bigger contribution.

"I deplore the fact that Germany has been left with the largest share of the burden (of aid to Russia and other ex-Soviet republics)," Mr. Kohl told a news conference.

"I want to contribute to the success of economic reforms and the stabilisation of democracy (in the ex-Soviet Union)," Mr. Kohl said.

He said that Germany had so far contributed about 60 per cent of all financial aid for the former Soviet republics.

Japan has been reluctant to offer Russia large-scale economic aid because of a territorial dispute over four Pacific islands seized by Moscow at the end of World War II.

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sovereignty over the islands, which lie off Japan's main northern island of Hokkaido.

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Mr. Kohl, whose visit to Japan was the fourth leg of a five-nation Asia tour, had talks with Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa earlier

Saturday.

Mr. Kohl said that he told Mr. Miyazawa that the European Community (EC) would not become a "fortress" against imports from outside the region as it moved towards greater economic integration.

"The EC will not cut itself off from the rest of the world, but we expect close cooperation from our partners and this means keeping markets open on both sides," he said.

Tokyo currently has a \$9.5 billion trade surplus with Bonn.

Mr. Kohl said that he and Mr. Miyazawa agreed on the need to discuss trade imbalances at the July summit and to work for an early conclusion of world trade talks under the Uruguay round.

Mr. Kohl on his first official visit to Tokyo since 1983, told reporters that big changes in the global order since the end of the cold war made reform of the United Nations necessary.

"It is in our common interests to enhance the peacekeeping functions of the U.N.," he said, adding that this may entail revision of Germany's constitution.

Blast rocks London shopping area

LONDON (R) — An explosion rocked London's busy Camden Town shopping area Saturday and police said there were about 10 injuries.

The explosion was on Camden High Street, which is a short distance from the Camden Lock Market which attracts people from all over London as well as tourists.

Police said there had been telephone warnings that explosions were about to take place.

The Irish Republican Army, fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, has intensified its mainland bombing campaign recently but it was not immediately clear what had caused the blast.

The IRA claimed responsibility for bombing a gas works in Northern England Friday and police said there were "strong indications" that the IRA was responsible for shooting a policeman and abducting a teenage motorist nearby.

The IRA has attacked targets around the country, constantly switching tactics to keep security forces off guard.

The IRA claimed responsibility for two blasts in Manchester in December which injured more than 60 people and carried out a pre-Christmas blitz of London with a series of small bombs.

Meanwhile a 64-year-old woman in Northern Ireland was shot twice by mistake because (IRA) gunmen thought she was a police detective.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, claimed responsibility in a statement released to the media and "apologised" for shooting the wrong woman. They added their intended target was a police detective.

Police said the woman, whose condition was not known, was hit in the arm and chest after gunmen fired through a window into her home at Armagh city. The men escaped in a hijacked car.

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U.S., Soviet planners had similar doomsday scenarios

PRINCETON, N.J. (AP) — The United States and Soviet Union built huge nuclear arsenals because each suspected the other of preparing for a doomsday attack, some of the men who made the decisions have acknowledged.

Former top officials of both countries discussed a newly declassified 1983 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) assessment that portrayed the Soviet Union as "very serious about pursuing defence and about developing the capability to fight and survive a nuclear war."

They gathered at a Princeton University conference on the end of the cold war.

Former Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh said that at the time the CIA was making that assessment, the KGB was telling Soviet leaders "almost the same story" about United States intentions. Mr. Bessmertnykh, who became for-

mer minister in 1991, was a member of the Soviet Defence Council in 1983.

He said Soviet officials believed Ronald Reagan was pursuing an enormous military buildup that "indicated the United States was serious about overwhelming the Soviet Union."

Other participants in the discussion included former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci, and Paul Nitze, who was an arms negotiator during the Reagan years.

Lawrence Gershwin, author of the 1983 CIA estimate, said that construction of a huge radar installation at Krasnoyarsk "in blatant violation of the ABM treaty," was seen as evidence of a Soviet intention to develop "a war fighting programme."

Mr. Bessmertnykh said the CIA view of the radar was "an

exaggerated appraisal." He said the installation was an attempt to close a gap in the Soviet air defence system.

"Of course, the radar violated the treaty," he conceded.

When Foreign Ministry officials pointed out the violation to their defence counterparts, he said the response was, "when the Americans start crying out, you'll find an answer."

The major U.S. defence effort of the period was the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), the space-based missile defence system proposed by Mr. Reagan.

Mr. Shultz said the system was "very much driven by Ronald Reagan. It was personal."

He described a briefing Mr. Reagan received at the Air Defence Command Centre in Colorado.

"There are all sorts of consoles keeping track of everything in all

sorts of places," he said. "It's very impressive. He went there as a presidential candidate, having also been briefed on the heavy Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles."

A Reagan aide asked the general in charge what would happen if a Soviet nuclear warhead hit somewhere nearby.

"The general said, 'It would blow us away,'" said Mr. Shultz. "Reagan said, 'well, what can we do about it?' the general said, 'nothing.' The future president concluded that was a hell of a state of affairs."

Mr. Shultz said that was Mr. Reagan's motivation to pursue SDI rather than any calculated plan to force the Soviets to spend themselves into bankruptcy.

Mr. Bessmertnykh said that when Mr. Reagan first proposed SDI as a shield that could block all incoming missiles Soviet planners decided "this was a fantasy"

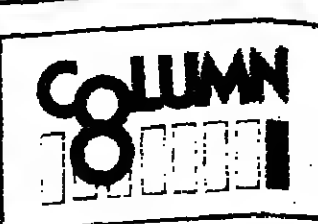
not worth worrying about.

But later, more limited versions caused great concern. He said the CIA was correct in saying the Soviets were working hard to upgrade their land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force.

"The ICBM was always the heart of the Russian force," he said. "We thought the only way we could respond to the threat of SDI was to develop the ICBM as much as possible."

Soviet officials said ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was convinced any attempt to match Mr. Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative of 1983 to build a space-based defence against missiles would do irreparable harm to the Soviet economy.

They also said the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine in April 1986 brought home vividly the reality of what a nuclear war would entail.



Gore jokes about his dancing

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Al Gore joked about criticism of his dancing ability Friday during a one-hour, television call in show, but said, "Tipper thinks I'm a great dancer."

"You need to get Tipper to teach you some of her moves," said NBC Today anchor Katie Couric, who said she saw Mr. Gore and his wife dance at the inaugural balls. The subject came up when the last caller of the show said to the vice president, "I don't think you're such a bad dancer."

"Thanks, you've made my day," responded Mr. Gore, who had spent most of the hour urging callers to pressure Congress to pass the Clinton administration's economic package as a cure for their concerns, ranging from crime to veteran's benefits. He said that for days after the couple danced at the balls, people were complimenting Mrs. Gore's grace, but never said anything about him. "When Jay Leno had his contest to see if anyone could dance worse than the vice president, I was really rooting for those guys, but nobody won," he joked.

Man wearing Nixon mask robs bank

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP) — A man wearing a rubber mask of former President Richard Nixon robbed a bank in this Minneapolis suburb, and police suspect he is half of a duo that has used politicians' masks in 31 bank robberies since 1985. The robber, armed with a semiautomatic pistol, ordered everyone in Norwest Corp. to freeze. He demanded cash and fled in a getaway car that had been stolen, the FBI said. Just blocks away, he switched to another stolen car and disappeared. The FBI declined to say how much was taken. Police say two men have worn masks of Ronald Reagan and Michael Dukakis during heists from suburban Chicago into Wisconsin since 1985. The duo apparently started robbing banks in 1985, stopped after two robberies, then started up again in 1990, said Larry Mefford, bank robbery supervisor for the Minneapolis office of the FBI. Authorities believe that 25 of the robberies took place in the Chicago area and six in Wisconsin, the most recent in La Crosse on Feb. 4. Mr. Mefford said he believes the duo moved to Minnesota because Chicago authorities have been on their trail.

Moscow mayor bans foreign language billboards

MOSCOW (AP) — The mayor of Moscow has ordered that all outdoor advertising in a foreign language must include a Russian translation, a newspaper reported. St. Petersburg city officials took a similar step in December, saying signs exclusively in foreign languages offended local feelings. Colourful signs in foreign languages — mostly English — have blossomed in Moscow since the fall of the Soviet Union. Customers seem to prefer Western style logos, signs and ads. In a recent marketing experiment, a popular American brand of cigarettes was offered for sale under a sign in English next to the same cigarettes under a sign in Russian. "The lot with the English sign sold a lot faster and for a higher price," the daily Kommersant said. Afflicted for decades by a shortage of consumer goods and shoddy products, Russians have long shown a preference for Western merchandise. Foreign goods have been flowing into the country since the Soviet collapse.

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